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Making composition history: Fred Newton Scott

Gary D. McKinney
Iowa State University

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Making Composition History:

Fred Newton Scott

by

Gary Dean McKinney

**A Thesis Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS**

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Signature redacted for privacy

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Signature redacted for privacy

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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Introduction

In 1977, Donald Stewart conducted a survey of literature history and rhetoric and composition history knowledge at an NCTE convention in New York City. Since the respondents were reputable instructors who spent almost half their time teaching composition, Stewart was surprised at the results. On the section that tested knowledge of literature history, the high score was 92.5; the low score was 27.5; the average score, 67; mean score, 72.5. Stewart adds, "14 people scored in the 80's, four in the 90's" (1978a 66). The results of the test on Composition history are best described by Stewart himself:

The average score on this quiz was 16. The median, if you prefer that average, was 12.5. No, those are not printer's errors. The numbers are 16 and 12.5. The top score was 75.... The lowest score, 0, was shared by seven individuals. Fifteen people, who collectively estimated their composition time at 34% of their work load, scored 2.5 or less. (67)

One of the figures named on Stewart's rhetoric and composition test was Fred Newton Scott. Stewart reported that seven of seventy-four people who took the survey recognized Scott's name, and "only *one* had read anything by Scott" (1978b 14).

This essay is about Fred Newton Scott, and I begin by wondering how different--if any--the results would be fifteen years later. Unable to replicate Stewart's survey, I pose to the reader a series of questions similar in nature: How much do you know about composition history? For example, can you tell the story of current traditional rhetoric, a catch-phrase of our day? Do you know where it came from? How about the Phaedrus, Ramus, Belle Lettres, Adams Sherman Hill, Kenneth Burke, Albert Kitzhaber (all on Stewart's list)? More to the point of this study, have you ever heard of Fred Newton Scott? Do

you know that Scott talked and taught early in this century, while the current traditional paradigm was coming about? Do you realize that what he said -- about superficial correctness, etc.--sounds startlingly like what we say today? Did you know that Scott had what seems in retrospect to be a perfect opportunity to *prevent* our budding English discipline from going down the route we took, and that he tried?

Scott was a well-known rhetorician in his time. He was one of the few that established a graduate program of study of rhetoric independent from classical or English studies. In the early twentieth century, there were other university chairs that were rhetoric in name, but Scott alone pursued rhetoric in deed. However, Scott is not as well known as others on Stewart's list. Somehow, during the half century we spent pursuing correctness, Scott, along with rhetoric itself, became obscured and nearly lost. Fortunately rhetoric is experiencing a revival, and along with this resurgence of interest in rhetorica, the message of Scott has once again become relevant.

This study seeks to explore indirectly our method of making history by viewing texts that discuss Scott, some familiar, some up to this point overlooked. More directly, it seeks to make Fred Newton Scott a familiar figure to the reader by exploring what he said and what others have said about him. The study attempts to address three basic questions regarding Scott: First, what was Scott's significance in his own day? Was he really, as this paper claims, an important part of the early formation of English departments and writing programs? Second, if Scott did have a significant and influential role in our early history, what happened? How did someone so important get so lost? Third, what is Scott's significance to **our** day? If we do succeed in rediscovering Scott, what will he contribute to our conversation today?

For a justification of the necessity of historical inquiry itself, I refer the reader to Robert Connor's "Historical Inquiry in Composition Studies" and Steven North's The Making of Knowledge in Composition. Donald Stewart, in addition to his work on Scott, also wrote and spoke extensively on the importance of quality and depth in historical research. In 1978, Stewart published "The Barnyard Goose, History, and Fred Newton Scott," where he compared the modern composition teacher to a proverbial goose, naively

greeting a brand new world each morning. Stewart quotes a speech given by Paul Bryant at the 1973 CCCC to continue this line of thought:

"Too often we behave...as if there is no continuity in the teaching of composition, as if the subject has just been invented and every idea for teaching it is new at the moment. We fail to draw on the experience of colleagues. We learn neither from past successes, of which there have been a few, nor from past failures, of which there have been all too many. As a group, we are the living proof of the adage that those who do not know history are condemned to repeat it. (1978b 14)

Stewart sought, in that article as well as most he wrote, a different, more responsible awareness of the difficulty and necessity of recording history. In "Some History Lessons for Composition Teachers," Stewart recommends the study of composition history for the **flexibility** it gives to the teachers that read it.

It is wise, therefore, to have the historical perspective. It gives theoretical depth and philosophical breadth to our perceptions of this most important and intriguing enterprise we call the teaching of composition. And that may be the most important history lesson that we, as composition teachers, will ever learn. (23)

It is in the spirit of what Stewart sought that this text is written.

As for this text's organization, the rest of this chapter presents two versions of basic biographical information about Scott, one quite brief and the other not so brief. I have taken the liberty to insert within the longer biography numerous references and explanations in order to give as full a picture of the man as I can before looking at what others say about him. The timeline is provided here (and not in an appendix) so that the reader can use it, both as an overview and as a ready reference while reading. Chapter two is a rather extended walk through the words that have been written about Scott. Its progress sometimes meanders and is often anecdotal, due to the number and

variety of sources referenced. There is no text presently available on Scott that brings all relevant sources together, and while that task is perhaps beyond the scope of this thesis, the work is at least begun here. Chapter three serves somewhat to synthesize the texts discussed in chapter two and others of Scott's own that inform his thinking and contribution (divided into two parts, teaching and rhetoric and composition) and also contains a conclusion, with observations on the timing and situatedness of Scott's role in composition history.

Background

Time Line

1860	Aug 20 Scott born in Terre Haute, IN
1878	moved to Battle Creek, MI
1879	graduated from Battle Creek High School
1880	matriculated at the University of Michigan
1884	received A.B.
1887	appointed as instructor in English at Michigan
1888	received A.M.
1889	received Ph.D.
1890	promoted to assistant professor
1893	<u>Paragraph Writing</u> with Joseph V. Denney
1894	began teaching rhetoric history/theory
1896	promoted to associate ("junior") professor on MLA nominating committee (also 1900, 1908-1910, 1914-1915)
1897	<u>Composition-Rhetoric</u> with Denney
1899-1900	conducted rhetoric survey in northern colleges
1900	<u>Elementary English Composition</u> with Denney
1901	promoted to full professor "College Entrance Requirements in English"

- 1902 Composition-Literature with Denney
- 1903 became head of new Department of Rhetoric
- 1905 A Brief English Grammar with Gertrude Buck
- 1906-7 traveled abroad (England, Germany)
- 1907 president of MLA; "The Genesis of Speech" was the
pres. address, published in 1908 Proceedings
- 1909 "What the West Wants in Preparatory English"
correspondence with Spingarn and others regarding
Modern Language Bulletin initiated (this
issue was culminated in March of 1910)
"Rhetorica Rediviva" (speech given at MLA)
- 1911 president of NCTE (also 1912)
"Two Ideals of Composition Teaching"
- 1912 "Verbal Taboos"
- 1913 president of N. Central Assoc. of Colleges and
Secondary Schools
"Our Problems" (1912 NCTE President's speech)
- 1914 "The Undefended Gate"
- 1915 Plays by Leonid Andreyeff (translation from the
Russian, with Clarence L. Meader)
Georgia Jackson correspondence initiated
(I count 50 letters from 1915-1921)
"Efficiency for Efficiency's Sake"
- 1916 "Speech and the Community"
- 1917 president of Am. Assoc. of Journalism Teachers
"The Standard of American Speech"
- 1919 review of H.L. Mencken's The American Language
- 1920 traveled abroad (London in July-August)
- 1921 title changed to Head of Dept. of Rhetoric and
Journalism
"Poetry in a Commercial Age"
- 1922 January Gertrude Buck died
March Isadore died (Scott's first wife)

- 1922 (c.) correspondence regarding Society for Preservation
of English initiated
"English Composition as a Mode of Behavior"
- 1923 married Georgia Jackson
- 1923-4 traveled abroad
- 1926-7 The Standard of American Speech and Other Papers
traveled abroad; correspondence from T.E. Rankin
chronicles demise of department of rhetoric
- 1927 attended SPE meeting in London
retired; moved to Tucson
P.M. Jack appointed head of rhetoric department
- 1929 Fred Newton Scott Anniversary Papers
- 1931 May 29 Scott died in San Diego, CA

Biography of Scott

The Early Years (1860-1903)

Fred Newton Scott was born on August 20, 1860, in Terre Haute, Indiana. His parents were Mary Bannister and Harvey D. Scott, who was a lawyer. He attended the Indiana Normal School (later Indiana State University), and credits William A. Jones with introducing him to the science of Psychology, an influence that would color his life-long interests and priorities (Scott "Autobiography"¹).

In 1878, Scott moved from Indiana to Battle Creek, Michigan, and took employment with John H. Kellogg at the Battle Creek Sanitarium, and the next year graduated from Battle Creek High School. This move accomplished two things for Scott: money for college and a Michigan high school diploma, with which he could bypass the entrance examinations in gaining admittance to the University of Michigan in nearby Ann Arbor, which he did in 1880.

Scott gained all his degrees at the University of Michigan, his B.A. in 1884, M.A. in 1888, and Ph.D. in 1889. During this time, he studied some abroad in Munich, wrote for the school papers, was an assistant librarian at Michigan, worked for a Cleveland newspaper, and "was married in 1887 to Isadore Thompson, a classmate in the University" (Scott "Autobiography"). By the time he had his Ph.D., Scott had gained an appointment as English Instructor at Michigan. He would spend his entire professional career there.

Scott's advancement at Michigan was fairly rapid. He was promoted from instructor to assistant professor in 1890, to associate ("junior") professor in 1896, and to full professor in 1901. In 1894, Scott began teaching rhetoric history and theory. Throughout his career, Scott chose to keep the term "rhetoric" in his title, even though many in English departments were hurriedly abandoning the classical discipline.² Most notable in this movement away from rhetoric was Harvard University, which had great influence on the curriculum of both high schools and other colleges of the day. Through the efforts of such men as Edward T. Channing and Francis J. Child, both Harvard Boylston Professors of Rhetoric who had more interest in literature than rhetoric, the focus of English departments turned to literature, and rhetoric and composition were reduced to matters of mechanical correctness. Scott foresaw this move and vigorously opposed it (and Harvard's influence) in the professional journals of his day. Significant among these articles is "The Report on College-Entrance Requirements in English" (1900) in Educational Review and "College Entrance Requirements in English" (1901) in School Review.³

The 1900 "Report on College-Entrance Requirements" shows Scott's ability to level a fiery challenge with the rhetoric necessary to have it be heard. He first acknowledges that the Harvard Report of the Committee on College Entrance Requirements has several virtues, "endeavoring to simplify the English course in secondary schools" and "the recommendation that the study of English literature and of composition be pursued side by side thruout [sic] the entire secondary school course" (290). The cooperation instead of competition of these two facets of language study, **both on an equal level**, was an important feature of Scott's approach.⁴

There ought to be in every high school just two courses in English, a course in English composition and a course in English literature. These should run like two solid steel pillars from the foundation clear to the roof. There ought never to be a question of breaking their continuity anywhere. I believe the time is coming when this ideal will prevail.

Having established a tactful stance, Scott quickly moves to three issues that comprise "the reverse of the medal" (291). First, the Harvard's report "is not of the character which English teachers had a right to expect," that for such a big problem as nation-wide English, the committee presents too simplistic an answer (291). Scott's second complaint was "its dogmatism." The report, to Scott, is either unable or unwilling to acknowledge the fact that English is "a kind of pedagogical porcupine," "fuller of unsolved problems than any other subject that can be mentioned" (292). Third, "the report plays too much upon the surface...the heart of the problem remains untouched" (293). That deeper problem, to Scott, was the relationship between the teaching of English and "the ultimate ends of education" (293).

Are our methods of instruction in English in harmony with the social demands of our great industrial community? I suspect that they are not. More than that I suspect that the hard knot of the English question lies right here--that our present ideals and methods of instruction are in large part remnants of an adaptation to a state of things which long since passed away (293-4).

Scott's second article on "College-Entrance Requirements in English" (1901) has a similar purpose to the first, but it further reveals his theoretical thinking of the time. Scott uses "two distinct and opposed conceptions,...the Feudal Conception and the Organic Conception," to describe the relationship between colleges and secondary schools (365). In the first, following Harvard's example, the university exists and makes its decisions without regard for the secondary school.

It is not affected by changes in the schools.... To all appeals from the schools it has just one reply: "Fit pupils to pass our examinations and the drawbridge will be lowered. If you cannot fit them, you are no longer of any interest to us. We will have none of you" (366).

Scott sees the need to "call in the aid of a wholly different metaphor," that of a living organism (368). His model is derived from Plato and from the Michigan educational system of his time. In the organic model, the university and the secondary schools are parts of a whole system, dependent on each other and fairly dividing the labor. In this ideal situation, "neither can act arbitrarily and independently without endangering the integrity of the organism" (368-369).

Such an attitude, says Scott, increases the responsibilities of the schools, first of the principals, who need to "cultivate a great tenderness of conscience with regard to secondary English," then of the teachers, who ultimately "hold the key to the situation" (377). Perhaps it was this very duty that caused schools and teachers to follow Harvard's model despite Scott's warnings.

It was also in the early part of his career that Scott produced his textbooks, all of which were written collaboratively and designed mainly for high school study of English. His textbooks include Paragraph Writing (1893)-- "probably Scott's most successful and continuously used text" (Stewart 1985a 48), Composition-Rhetoric (1897), Elementary English Composition (1900), Composition-Literature (1902), all with Joseph V. Denney; Introduction to the Methods and Materials of Literary Criticism (1899), with Charles M. Gayley; and The Teaching of English (1903), with George R. Carpenter and Franklin T. Baker. In addition, Scott produced A Brief English Grammar (1905), with Gertrude Buck, and Lessons in English (1906), with Gordon A. Southworth. Scott's textbooks reflected typical arrangements in content for his time, but they are significantly different in their theoretical base from the works of his peers and are progressive by modern standards. A portion of A Brief English

Grammar, for example, shows Scott and Buck's descriptive approach to grammar:

It is sometimes said that grammar is a collection of rules for correct speaking and writing; but this is not strictly true. The rules of grammar are like the laws of any physical science, such as chemistry, physics, astronomy, or physical geography. These sciences are not a collection of rules telling the winds and tides, for instance, what they must do, or prescribing how a certain acid and a certain base shall unite. They only report and explain what happens. And so grammar does not say to us directly, "You must speak thus and so," but only, "English people at the present time do speak thus and so, for the following reasons." (12-13)

The Middle Years (1903-1922)

In 1903, Scott began his own Department of Rhetoric at the University of Michigan, an action many regard as his greatest contribution to our discipline. Scott was able to begin the new department perhaps due to notoriety and influence gained from his stance against Harvard, since a rivalry by then existed between colleges in the east and the midwest (Berlin 1987 35-36). The new department became possible certainly because of Scott's fame as a teacher. Humphreys states that "the man who during the years around 1900 attracted students from all over the country, and, notably, advanced students from the East, was Fred Newton Scott" (550).

Scott conducted his graduate classes around a big round wooden table and used a non-directive, questioning method of instruction, challenging his students to think for themselves. He had a vast base of knowledge, and not just about English matters. In 1930, Louis Strauss, a colleague of Scott, said about him, "Dr. Scott's conception of rhetoric was catholic in the extreme; it was limited only by the range of his personal interests, which really means that it was not limited at all" (332). Kitzhaber also credits the success of the program to the effectiveness of Scott's teaching:

Students also found his attitude toward his subject stimulating. His keen awareness of the relations of rhetoric to other disciplines, his alertness in keeping abreast of new developments in these disciplines, his view of language as a social phenomenon serving definite human needs, his liberal and informed attitude toward linguistic usage--these, together with his impelling curiosity about literary effects and his conviction that these effects are capable of being studied and described, made graduate work in rhetoric a challenging and rewarding experience. (73)

Scott was not only knowledgeable of many disciplines, he was significantly involved in them. His papers and speeches presented to the MLA during this period almost all reflect his interest in philology or linguistics. Some of these include "The Most Fundamental Differentia of Poetry and Prose" (1904), "The Scansion of Prose Rhythm" (1905), "The Order of Words in Certain Rhythm-Groups" (1913), and "'Vowel Alliteration in Modern Poetry" (1915).⁵ Many sources credit Scott with teaching the first college course in journalism in America, in contrast to H. L. Mencken's caustic appraisal of Scott's knowledge of this field (Kitzhaber 70; see chapter 2). In 1905 and 1910, Scott wrote Memorable Passages from the Bible and Selections from the Old Testament. In 1915 and 1917, Scott translated from Russian Plays by Leonid Andreyeff and poems by N.A. Nekrasov for English publication. Scott belonged to numerous societies, both national and international, that pursued interests in science, psychology, and other disciplines. Stewart concludes that Scott was "a man of such wide ranging interests and competencies that it would have been difficult even for his contemporaries to decide what his intellectual legacy would be" (1985a 26).

Scott's activity and influence in his own field was also extensive. He was president of the MLA in 1907. He had headed the pedagogical section of that body from 1896 until the MLA disbanded it in 1903.⁶ In 1909, Scott got involved with a MLA committee that attempted to introduce a more pragmatic journal than the Modern Language Notes, a Modern Language Bulletin, into the MLA. The committee hoped to publish doctoral dissertations and studies of

a more practical, pedagogical bent. This effort was squelched in 1910 by W. G. Howard, acting secretary of the MLA. Immediately on the heels of this incident, Scott had a direct hand in establishing the practical, pedagogical National Council of Teachers of English.⁷ Scott was the first and only two-time president of NCTE in 1911 and 1912, and Hook says "he established [a] precedent of long-continuing NCTE service following [his] presidency" (5). He was also president of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in 1913, and, in 1917, president of the American Association of Journalism Teachers.

During this period Scott published quite a number of works on a variety of topics, reflecting his many areas of interest. Several have been already mentioned above. His most original work was in his chosen field, rhetoric, and the following summarizes some of the best of these articles, all of which are collected in The Standard of American Speech and Other Papers.

In "The Genesis of Speech" (1908), his MLA President's address, Scott taps into the interest in evolution and origins stimulated by Darwin late in the previous century.⁸ He substitutes genesis for origin, and the following defense for that decision reveals Scott's theoretical belief in language as a process.

There are persons to whom the word *origin* is fatally suggestive; they cannot hear it applied to speech without thinking forthwith of an invention or a discovery; they tend under its influence to conceive of speech as coming into existence under the conditions and through the agencies which went to the making of Esperanto and Ido; it is almost as if they imagined some clever troglodyte saying to his fellow: "A happy thought strikes me; let us invent a language."

Genesis will, I hope, suggest a different view; it presents speech not as an invention, but as a process, not as an abrupt, but as a slow and gradual coming-into-existence, like the evolution of man himself, proceeding without a break from beginnings crude and humble and scarcely recognizable, yet not contemptible, to the rich and complex function of the present day. (312)

Scott differentiates between "life-serving" and "expressive communicative" movements, the latter being the "means by which individuals are bound together in a social group" (317). By means of an extensive and complicated description Scott explains the process by which he believes original, physical actions became expressive and communicative movements and then language.

In "Two Ideals of Composition Teaching" (1911), Scott questions "whether the ideal of composition teaching which prevails at the present time, which appears in our text-books and school-room methods, is on the whole the best ideal that has been discovered" (35).⁹ That present ideal is, according to Scott, the ideal of *success*, descended from the ancient rhetorician Korax, via the Sophists and then Aristotle, whose "influence upon the teaching of composition has been extraordinary" (38). An alternative ideal, that of *social service*, is found by Scott in Plato's Phaedrus: Socrates' familiar denunciation of rhetoric as flattery. Scott points out that modern popular short stories meet all the criteria for "success" yet have forgotten that the attainment of language skills bring about a responsibility for training the "souls" of our country's citizens. He complains:

To me most of the stories which appear in the popular magazines seem the work of men who are either ignorant of this fundamental principle of good writing or for the sake of gain have deliberately turned their backs upon it. (44)

Scott appeals to teachers of writing to recognize the difference between these two ideals and to convey in their classes the higher of the two.

In "The Standard of American Speech" (1917), Scott protests the view that American English is inferior to British English. He points out that the typical conception that there existed some perfect standard in British English, "that all cultured Englishmen speak alike," was simply not true (2-3).¹⁰

The idea that somewhere, in some linguistic British Utopia, there exists a standard English which all cultured Englishmen use alike and cannot help but use, and to which distracted Americans may resort for chastening and absolution, is a pleasing hallucination. (4)

Scott points out that variation in language exists in both British and American and is a part of its "goodness, that is, its interest and charm" (4).

The idea of a fixed standard to be settled arbitrarily once and for all by some authority or set of authorities may be abandoned summarily. It is untenable, both in theory and in practice. (7)

His reason for this conviction? "It is of the essence of language to change" (7).

In "English Composition as a Mode of Behavior" (1922), Scott shows understanding and sympathy for the writing student when he condemns the longstanding and "almost universal practice of teaching composition by pointing out to the writer the errors in his themes" (463). Scott feels this method of teaching composition is largely a waste of time because it "fails to reach the inward disease of which the errors are merely the outlying and obvious symptoms" (463). He instructs the reader regarding the "primal causes of what we know as errors in student English" (463). These include the influence of foreign languages, the breaking up of the family tradition, and, "the clash between, on the one hand, the instinctive, inherited impulse to communication, and on the other hand, the scholastic system of abstract symbolism which...we now use in the schools and regard as indispensable as a medium of culture" (466-467). This impulse to communicate is, for Scott, a natural thing, as shown by the language of children.

It is a mode of behavior like leaping, running, or tossing the arms. Words to a child are wishes, commands, ways of securing what one wants, ways of piecing out gestures. It is a language of vivid sensory reactions. Whatever psychologists may say, for children the word dog can bark,

the word knife can cut.

It is, to be sure, a riotous sort of language, formed without conscious effort or control; but it is perhaps not so lawless as it seems, for underneath, below the threshold of expression, are vague instincts of order and purpose that need only to be cultivated in order to become guiding principles. (467-468)

Teachers, according to Scott, do little cultivation but instead damage whatever natural ability a child brings to the classroom. "Upon this seething caldron of communicative impulses, the school, as ordinarily conducted, clamps the lid of linguistic ritual" (468). The product of the conflict of these two conflicting influences is a confused and distressed pupil and a confused, distressed hybrid language.

Unable to launch his message such as it is, either in the natural, free-and-easy style of ungirt speech, or in the strictly ordered march of a logical development, he devises a kind of scrambled language of his own, compounded of trite phrases and mangled idioms, which is neither fish nor flesh nor good red herring. "I was brought up," writes one student, "in an English spoken home, and have always lived in a neighborhood of the same and have had the influence of speaking English." (470)

Scott's remedy "lies in bringing the dissociated things together," attaching simple symbols to a child's beginning senses of unity, symmetry, restraint, etc., and "introducing into the symbolic apparatus the ideas of sociability and quick communication" that are characteristic of the child's world (470-471).

In 1919, in Educational Review, Scott wrote an evaluation of George P. Krapp's The Pronunciation of Standard English in America and of H. L. Mencken's The American Language. Scott saw in the two texts "a violent contrast" (172). Krapp was "cautious, painstaking...direct and simple" (172), whereas Mencken, "gather[ed] materials with a ravaging hand--materials which...cannot be taken seriously" (173). Perhaps because of this review,

Mencken ridiculed Scott and his work in later editions of American Language (see chapter two).

The Later Years (1922-)

In comparison to the fiery spirit and original thinking that characterized his early years and to the influential teaching and writing, dynamic organizing and running of his department, and extended involvement in varied academic disciplines that characterized his middle years, Scott's final era is much more subdued. No really significant works came after "Mode of Behavior." Scott published The Standard of American Speech and Other Papers in 1926, but this was simply a collection of his other, earlier writings into one volume. He did produce a dictionary of slang after he retired (Miller 16).

A possible reason for this lack of publishing was the death of Scott's wife, Isadore, on March 13, 1922. Included here is a portion of what Scott wrote in his journal that day, not available except in manuscript. It reflects his views of self and of writing as well as of Isadore:

Today at 1:15 died my dear good wife. She had a merry heart, a generous disposition, and a shrewd judgment. In almost all respects she was my opposite. I am a glum and uncommunicative sort, whereas she was light-hearted and fond of communication. I am indecisive and procrastinating, whereas she was eager to act and quick to decide. But we were, nevertheless, well-suited to each other.... Her going has cost me more anguish than I supposed to exist in the whole world. It has not only torn out all the fibers of association, meaning and companionship, it has shaken and bewildered my mental world. If I have found any consolation, it has come from this reflection: Although nothing can possibly take the place of the living person--the hand-clasp, the kiss, the glances of mutual understanding and affection, yet I do feel that in that part of me which her influences shaped, she is still present. That cannot be taken from me, and I act upon the impulses that come from that part of me. I am strengthening this better self and fixing it more firmly in place.

Earlier that same year, Scott's first doctoral graduate in rhetoric, good friend and collaborator, Gertrude Buck had also died.

A year later, in the summer of 1923, Scott remarried, to former student Georgia Jackson (see chapter two), and spent the school year traveling abroad, teaching and speaking in Europe. This involvement in international affairs may also explain Scott's lack of writing after 1922. In that year, correspondence was initiated between American and British parties concerning the establishment of an *American Society for the Preservation of English*. Scott also spent 1926-27 in England, at which time he attended a meeting between the two representatives of our spoken language. Little if any productive action was achieved through this effort, mostly due to resistance on the part of the Englishmen to receive American English on equal grounds and, as Scott had written earlier, as "a vigorous, hardy offshoot that is gradually assuming a form appropriate to our character and daily needs" (1917 11). Mencken reports a British response to one American's use of the term "Anglicisms":

What Dr. Canby meant by it, presumably, was some usage which his own country had not adopted. His point of view, at any rate, was clear enough. He claimed for America a right equal to his own to decide what is English and what is not! That is a claim which we cannot too emphatically repudiate.... The English language is our own.... On the question of what words and idioms are to be used or to be forbidden, we cannot afford any kind of compromise or even discussion with the semi-demi-English-speaking populations of overseas. Their choice is to accept our authority or else make their own language. (1945 63)

The reason for Scott's involvement in these affairs, which seem to conflict with his passion for things originally American, is not clear from his correspondence of the time. His many trips abroad¹¹ reflect an interest and concern with bringing together two distanced worlds.

Another likely reason Scott's output diminished during this period was that it was during this time the department of Rhetoric, which Scott had spent his life establishing, came under threat in Ann Arbor. Letters from T. E.

Rankin between 1925 and 1926 relate how the English department was encroaching on the territory of the rhetoric department, threatening and ultimately gaining amalgamation. Stewart tells the story well in "Writing Program Director":

After Scott's retirement in 1927, the two departments were merged at Michigan, an event which took place with much bitterness over several years. Significantly, those who took the lead in attempting to force this merger, particularly O.J. Campbell, were Harvard men. And their perception of rhetoric was quite obvious to the men in Michigan's Rhetoric Department. In a letter from Harold Scott to F. N. Scott, on leave during the 1923-24 academic year, the former tells his leader that "the new blood in that department [English--reference is to Campbell, James Holly Hanford, and Louis Bredvold], all outsiders, have really got the whip hand there. They believe that rhetoric and literature should be taught together, because they were taught together in the schools from which they came. They believe further that, because they have always put rhetoric in second place, it rightfully belongs in second place." (18)

When the department of rhetoric was reassimilated by the department of English in 1930, Stewart elsewhere asserts "a great chapter in the university's history...was nearly obliterated" (1979 542).¹²

Scott resigned as head of the rhetoric program on January 22, 1927, and was replaced for a few years by P. M. Jack, a Scot (Little 8/14/27). Scott retired to Tucson, Arizona, where he immediately involved himself in the writing program of the University of Arizona, establishing an annual \$100 scholarship for the winner of a prose competition there. In 1929, his friends, both former students and colleagues, honored him by publishing the Fred Newton Scott Anniversary Papers (see chapter two). A portion of Scott's acceptance speech, as recorded by Edwin Miller, shows Scott's learning, wit and humble gratitude.

I wish I could feel sure that the honor is deserved. It seems too good to be true. It used to be said of Lord Haldane that no living person could possibly be so wise as Lord Haldane looked. For my part, I know that I shall never be so wise nor so scholarly nor yet so intellectual as this volume would make out. But then, fortunately, I do not have to be. I am long past the years when it is necessary to make pretense about anything. I am like the man in a story that I lifted brazenly from the unrivaled collection of my friend Superintendent William McAndrew. It was the story of a man and a woman who, exploring an apartment house in Chicago on a slippery day, came hurriedly out on an upper landing and into collision. The woman's feet were knocked from under her, while the man's shot up into the air. In this not altogether becoming posture they glided with increasing speed down to the bottom landing. There was a moment of silence, and then the man, looking up into the woman's face, said, "Madam, you must get off here. This is as far as I go." Well, this is as far as I go. In the words of Charles Lamb, "I have done all that I came into this world to do. I have worked taskwork, and have the rest of the day to myself." One of the ways in which I hope to spend "the rest of the day" will be in recalling the delightful associations of my academic life, symbolized for me in this ingenious and heartwarming memorial. (15)

In January of 1931, the University of Michigan wrote to Scott, inviting him to come to Ann Arbor to receive an honorary Doctor of Letters. Georgia Scott responded that Scott would be "unable to accept.... He has been ill for almost a year with arteriosclerosis of the brain. I doubt if he could take the long journey, and I also doubt if he would understand much of the honor done him" (1/31/31).

On May 29, 1931, Fred Newton Scott died in San Diego, California.

CHAPTER II. VIEWING THE HISTORICAL RECORD ON SCOTT

It is obvious from the above account that during his day Scott played an important role in the shaping of what we now take for granted as English departments and rhetoric and composition programs. The idea that a figure such as Scott could be forgotten or that the reader of this text could be hearing about his life and his contribution for the first time seems absurd.

Nevertheless, due to certain circumstances of his day, Scott's ultimate, overt influence on composition studies ended up being negligible to nothing. English departments, with control over composition programs, went precisely the opposite way than that Scott recommended. The early twentieth century saw, with little exception, the complete abandonment of rhetoric by teachers of English. And, led by the efforts of Harvard, composition became the "stepchild" of English departments (Stewart 1985c 22).

While all this was happening to rhetoric and composition, what happened to Scott and to his reputation and influence? How have the history books remembered this important rhetorician of the turn of our century? Sadly, word of Fred Newton Scott as nearly passed away as rhetoric. In 1953, Albert Kitzhaber's important dissertation named Scott and explored his significance, but it was really not until the 1980's, more than fifty years after his career, that Scott returned to be really recognized as an important voice in the conversation of both his own day and ours.

This chapter reviews many of the words of history that have been written about Scott, some accurate and inaccurate, some favorable and nonfavorable. Scott has been remembered in different ways by different people. Perhaps what has been said about Scott says more about the author of those words than about Scott. Additionally, there are cases where Scott is not remembered at all. Certainly this says something about our process of writing down our history.

Scott's Contemporaries

Students and Colleagues

It is difficult to ascertain whether Scott was a big or little fish, but it is easy to assert that his pond was a giant one. Scott came in contact with many people, both through the classes he conducted or directed in the graduate rhetoric program at Michigan and through the many words he published in various international literary journals of his day. The contacts he made, he maintained through visits and letters. Scott spent a lot of time on both activities, but especially the latter, as evidenced by the extensive archive of correspondence now located at Bentley Library in Ann Arbor and known as the Fred Newton Scott Papers (not to be confused with the volume discussed in this section, The Fred Newton Scott Anniversary Papers). In 1916, in a letter from Gertrude Buck to Georgia Jackson regarding a proper use of the monies they were gathering for a memorial to Scott, Buck suggested funding a salary for a secretary, observing that he spent many hours conducting his correspondence himself (11/13/16).

Of special importance to Scott were those who were involved in some way in his work. Whether they were acquaintances or simply inquirers from the outside, an interest in rhetorical matters earned them an audience with Scott, or a reply through the mail. Of course, Scott's students and colleagues knew his work the best, and were most influenced by his ideas and actions. Some of these friends wrote down what they thought of him, both during and after his life, providing us with an inside view of Scott, and of his priorities, his thinking, his lifestyle.

This section briefly collects some of those perspectives on Scott. With a quick look at these texts, some generalizations arise about the feelings these individuals had toward Scott. First, they were fond of him. In all fairness it should be noted that these texts consist largely of letters or memorials to Scott. Second, they were influenced by him. Especially upon his students, but also upon his colleagues, Scott left an indelible mark. Third, they continually returned to him for further guidance, and fourth, his teaching was reflected in

their achievements and thinking. These two were particularly true of Scott's students; many of the letters contained in the correspondence are from those who had been under his guidance and still sought his opinion or recommendation, even long after they were established in their own right.

There is an irony to be found in the last three of these four effects Scott had on his students. His approach to teaching was one of non-interference; it was non-directive, encouraging discovery on the part of the pupil. How did he have such an **influence**, then, upon his students? Kitzhaber observes:

In the classroom he seldom expressed his own opinions; students looking back found they rarely could say Scott had told them this or that. Instead he used the Socratic method almost entirely, leading students to make their own discoveries and form their own conclusions. "He made us possess ourselves of *more than judgments*," writes one of his former students; "he made us acquire criteria...." (72-73)

This sort of non-directive direction, it turns out, can be of the most influential sort. Kitzhaber concludes that "no man was more influential than Scott in the reform movement of the [eighteen] nineties" (73). Of his ultimate influence, though it may not have been overt, Kitzhaber has this to say:

How far his influence extended through the impression that his ideas made on his students it would be difficult to say. Certain of his students, however, such as Sterling A. Leonard and Ruth M. Weeks, both of whom took master's degrees in rhetoric under Scott, were leaders in the movement that tried to promote a more liberal and scientific view toward language matters in composition courses and textbooks. (73)

John Dewey

Dewey was not a student of Scott, but an early colleague of his at the University of Michigan. The significance of Dewey's work has in our discipline is immense, and the effect Dewey's thinking had on Scott is also significant, as evidenced by numerous references in Scott's writings that acknowledged this

individual he was able to name as a friend.

In 1894, when Scott was an assistant professor at Michigan, Dewey wrote a biographical article about Scott for the school paper, the Oracle.¹³ Dewey mentions, among other things, Scott's involvement with the Oracle as well as other school journals, and also his knowledge of several languages and areas of study.

Mr. Scott is equipped with a working control of Sanskrit, Greek, Italian, Spanish, Danish and Russian, as well as a pretty complete outfit in the general theory and method of philology. Meantime, he has become interested in psychology and philosophy, considered as helps to literary interpretation, and has a knowledge of these subjects which professed teachers of these branches would not sneeze at. (121)

Dewey states that practical experience gained from working on a Cleveland newspaper staff during 1885-87 contributed to the success of Scott's teaching when he began as an instructor in English at Michigan in 1889. Students, Dewey notes in particular, found "the traditional grind of 'Freshman English'" was, under Scott, "not only useful, but actually interesting" (120). This serves not only as a statement on Scott's teaching but one on the typical teaching of writing of the day. An advantage to Scott's teaching style, said Dewey, was "his sense--a sense which he has imparted to his classes--that writing is not a pyrotechnic exhibition of fine phrases, or an ornamental addition to the bare truth of things, but the direct, natural reporting of what one has one's self seen and thought" (120). Dewey concludes,

The success of [Scott's] work is recorded chiefly where it should be, in the lives and thoughts of students quickened and deepened through contact with the good sense, the ease, the learning and practical bent of Mr. Scott. (121)

And,

Mr. Scott is still young enough to have his best work before him. I do not know just what direction it will take, but I am not afraid to prophesy that it will be marked by command of the resources available, by poise and facility of mind, by adaptation to the real currents of modern life, and, not least, by a style delicate enough to reflect the tints and shades, and broad enough to depict the leading features, of his subject-matter.
(122)

Georgia Jackson

Scott's correspondence reveals no less than fifty letters, sent between the years 1915-21, from Georgia Jackson, a former student of Scott. Georgia later became Scott's wife, but this retrospective knowledge does not affect our perception of the tone of her letters and the clear adulation she had for him while she admired him from a distance, long before any romance was possible. In tone, these letters begin respectful and proceed to friendly-yet-respectful, always manifesting a personable wit and charm. In 1916, Georgia questions, "Why be so serious about journalism? It is a light matter" (2/26/16). In 1917, she reminds Scott of his own saying as a teacher, "In writing, it's the thing you don't say that makes it rich" (1/12/17). In 1917 she increasingly ended her letters with the charge, "Don't respond to this," and wrote on May 14 of that year, "I'd rather hear from you than from anybody else, and yet I feel I have no right to ask so much attention when there are so many others who deserve their share, and I've had more than many of them already. Well. Some day when you are not too busy..." Later that year Georgia asked if Scott had seen an article on "your friend John Dewey" (6/19/17), and even later, Gertrude Buck's newly published poem, "Witch Hazel" (12/17/17). Probably no one else could have asked of Scott, when he didn't write for some time in 1920, "Can't you think of a thing to say? You promised to send me pictures of strange birds, beasts or trees you met abroad, and I have watched for them every mail" (12/11/20). On the back of this letter, as he was in the habit of doing, Scott pencils the beginnings of his reply, "I regret that all the interesting birds,

beasts and trees of Europe crossed my path when I had neither a gun nor a Kodak. The most interesting was H. G. Wells who sat on my left at one of the grandiose banquets--Sir Gilbert Porter was on my right--and he (Wells) resembled a tree more than he resembled a bird or even a beast."

Gertrude Buck

Georgia Jackson kept some of the letters sent to her in response to the idea she solicited in 1916-19 regarding establishing a memorial to Scott and his teaching. Several of these letters were from Gertrude Buck, Scott's "earliest and most brilliant rhetoric Ph.D." (Stewart 1982 123).

In a letter dated November 13, 1918, Buck, writing from Poughkeepsie, New York, made this statement about Scott's work:

It seems to me that Professor Scott stands for contributions to rhetorical theory far more distinctively than for any teaching of journalism. Other people may have done the latter but he is almost alone in the former field. This is what his reputation will ultimately stand on, I am convinced.

Then in 1919, when Jackson renewed efforts to establish this memorial, Buck stated that Scott's essays on the theory of Rhetoric and Journalism "represent his most significant contribution, aside from his actual teaching" (9/16/19).

The correspondence of Scott also contains letters from Gertrude Buck, 27 of them written between 1909 and 1914. Quite a number of these concerned arrangements for an occasion when Scott was scheduled to speak at Vassar College, where Buck taught; other times the subject was further collaborative efforts between the two of them (Scott had written A Brief English Grammar with Buck in 1905), and once Buck wrote, "I am beginning to incline toward the five case basis in English grammar--much to my own surprise. I hope this will not seem to you a betrayal of my ancient faith" (12/9/12). Several times, though, Buck spoke of progress she was making in gaining recognition in a male-dominated discipline, and several times Buck appealed to Scott, an obvious supporter in these efforts, for assisting some young woman in

furthering her studies in the field. In a letter dated February 3, 1910, Buck writes a recommendation for a Miss Taylor, who she thinks would make a good graduate student for Scott. Buck specifically states Taylor has the physical strength to complete a graduate program of study.

In 1929, a volume was published by colleagues and students of Scott, in honor of his teaching and his achievements. The book was entitled The Fred Newton Scott Anniversary Papers, and consisted of essays written on various subjects by people who had either studied under him (twelve of the fourteen essays were by former students) or worked alongside him.

Thomas Rankin

Rankin was a Michigan rhetoric colleague of Scott and a former student. He notes in the preface to the Anniversary Papers that the variety of topics covered in the essays contained therein reflects "the variety of intellectual sympathies of the man who has inspired their assemblage in this book" (vii). Rankin continues:

Professor Scott has revealed to all of us a mind subtle in humor, in penetrative insight into problems of life and mind, and in application of thought to constructive criticism of practical life and of the life of thought and inner feeling. Few are likely to surpass him in expressing acuteness of thought through simplicity of statement.... If the present volume can but lead its readers to the study of even a few of Professor Scott's creative additions to the field of rhetoric and criticism, its destiny may be amply fulfilled, for in them are to be found keen and searching examinations of the essential problems arising in all serious and far-reaching study of language. The footings and foundations for the future superstructure of psychologically full and precise analysis and interpretation of the phenomena of speech are in his work. (vii-viii)

Rankin was a close colleague of Scott's; it is his letters that chronicle the downfall of the rhetoric department in 1925-26. These letters convey Rankin's

discouragement and even a disgust with the Michigan president and English department, largely staffed by Harvard graduates, who sought to take over the rhetoric department.¹⁴

Miller (see below) includes in his eulogy the speech made by Rankin at the presentation of the Anniversary Papers. In this speech, Rankin states that he had known Scott thirty-three years, yet "despite the third of a century, I have not yet fathomed this man; nor have others, for he is an individual, not a type" (Miller 12). Rankin thought that "comprehensiveness" was the term that best characterized Scott.

We felt in his classroom that he was all that Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy should imply.... No man in the University of Michigan has been more widely and favorably known in the international world of scholarship than he has been known. (Miller 13)

Helen Mahin

Mahin wrote "Half-Lights," the first piece in the Anniversary Papers and the only one that is written directly about Scott instead of about language studies. She calls her essay a "confession of faith," and describes her beginning experience at Michigan as that of the typical student:

The pursuit of study was interesting but not exciting, and it had no great depths.... Study was not a matter of ecstasy, as far as my experience went. (1)

Under the tutelage of Scott, Mahin discovered a different perspective on study. She describes Scott's teaching: "the scholarly man at the table, twirling his glasses or tapping a folded paper, and speaking unobtrusively, leading us out or quietly challenging our foolish words," and states that Scott "did much less of imparting than of inspiring" (2).

I remember the excitement with which I found myself going into a new field of research; exploring it with a delight that I had never known

before, and coming out with something in my hands, conscious at once of having been guided and of having learned to guide myself. As a personal gift, I remember the calm reassurance with which he kept me talking for the half-hour before my particular final ordeal, until when the formidable men gathered I was hardly aware that anything was going on more than a discussion of an absorbing subject" (2-3).

Mahin credits Scott with teaching her to hold on to the "fitful and elusive" half-lights of impressions and experience, and that if she was able to keep them prisoner, they "may someday emerge in clear consciousness" (2). She concludes with a comparison of Scott to perishable theory, and says,

It is a sad sight when a teacher of pedestrian mind dwells long in one school. If he can do no more than impart information he would better move now and then, so that he may at least come to his students with the freshness of new contact. But he who can every year teach his people to know the happiness of intellectual achievement made one with the life of every day, to set themselves high standards and never to be able to follow low ones, to be joyous students as long as they live, his work is like his theory: It has no beginning or end. Professor Scott is such a teacher. (3)

Edwin Miller

A paper by Edwin Miller, also a former student and colleague of Scott, is found at the end of the Fred Newton Scott Papers in the Bentley library collection.¹⁵ It was written after Scott's death, and is a eulogy, if an informal and personal one, in which Miller reminisces about being a student at Michigan when Scott started teaching there. He notes that Scott "almost immediately started a course which he called rapid writing" (1).¹⁶

To Miller, who took several of his classes, Scott was a "remarkable personality" who "seemed to me to know everything" (1,4). Regarding Scott's personality, Miller says that "Scott was not what you would call a loquacious man, but he was witty and possessed a most delightful sense of humor" (16).

Miller recounts an experience from his senior year at Michigan when, in need of certain courses to graduate, he took from Scott a class in literary criticism, from which he was absent at one time for five weeks. He returned once, only to find himself called upon by Scott to discuss the day's subject, which he did at length. Miller continues, "Thinking that my chances of passing the course were ruined, I abstained from going back to class; but I received my credit at the end of the semester. I mention the circumstance as illustrating Scott's fairness, urbanity, and common sense, three of his most prominent characteristics" (5).

Miller recalls a 1901 address made by Scott to the New England Association of Teachers of English. The speech, titled "Marks and Remarks," says much about Scott's regard for the student and his style of teaching. Miller quotes Scott:

Composition does not lie in any connection with mathematics or with the mathematical way of evaluating the ends that we want to attain. What I have before me is a set of individuals, personalities of a most interesting character, to me, every one of them. Even the stupid boy on the back seat who gets most of his answers wrong is to me interesting as a personality, and everything he says is interesting, when I am in the right mood. I wish I could be in the right mood all the time. It doesn't make any difference whether it is right or wrong; it is interesting, and when I hear somebody talk about dull undergraduates, I resent it. They are stupid, undoubtedly, but they are vertebrate animals for all that, and we ought to take a human interest even in their faults and weaknesses. (7)

These words spoken about Scott by his friends and their remembrances of him tell us much about his personality and his convictions. However, not all of Scott's contemporaries were fans, as the following section will witness.

H. L. Mencken: A Case of False Representation

One of the primary questions raised above was, how did Scott get so easily and thoroughly lost to composition? Donald Stewart, in "Reputation Lost: A Brief Note in the History of American Letters," provides one possible explanation for Scott's loss.

I have discovered a few of the ways in which the reputation of one great man was assisted into oblivion. The "assistors" were a famous American editor with a bad temper and an ax to grind, and a modern novelist who was a careless scholar. (Stewart 1983 1).

The editor Stewart leveled this accusation against was H.L. Mencken, the American journalist.

The high point of Mencken's career (as editor of the monthly American Mercury in the 1920's) occurred just at the end of Scott's, and that he was a controversial figure in American history is an understatement. Fitzpatrick labels Mencken the most frequently quoted American author (111), but this accolade may be a dubious credit, a sentiment that Alfred Knopf, Mencken's publisher, conveyed in the 1928 Menckiana: A Schimpflexikon (a collection of abuse):

During the single year 1926 more than 500 separate editorials upon the sayings and doings of Mr. Mencken were printed in the United States, and at least four-fifths of them were unfavorable. Himself given to somewhat acidulous utterance, he has probably been denounced more vigorously and at greater length than any other American of his time.

The characterization most commonly applied to Mencken in the history books is that of iconoclast. Fitzpatrick says Mencken "always viewed attack as the best defense" (114). But his predilection for aggressive writing sometimes caused inaccuracy in that writing. Charles Angoff, a colleague from Mencken's American Mercury days, says, "He was, first and last, a journalist looking for copy and not too particular about the reliability or soundness of that copy so long as it was interesting and--to use one of his favorite phrases--

"stirred up the animals" (11). Well-known as an Anglophobe, Mencken often stirred up the animals by writing defenses of American English against British influences and any against any Anglophile who he saw representing them. This became the case of Professor Fred Scott, who Mencken mentioned several times in his book, The American Language.

The American Language was an important and lengthy philological text, one that Mencken himself thought would bring him the most fame. Mencken produced four editions and two large supplements of The American Language during his life, and it was again reissued in 1968. In it, Mencken championed the cause of American versus British English. And in it, Mencken briefly mentions Scott, mainly because he went abroad in 1927 to participate in an attempt to establish an international Society for Pure English, an activity which Mencken condemned in every edition of The American Language.

This conference hardly got beyond polite futilities, but the fact that the call for it came from the American side made it suspect from the start, and its deliberations met with unconcealed hostility (1936 32-34).

Mencken's own view was that English had unrecoverably and for the better diverged into two streams of British and American, and he delighted in reporting a perceived failure of Scott's mission. Scott became the target of Mencken not only because he participated in these affairs, but also because of he (Mencken) disliked anything that had to do with academia (Fitzpatrick 107), and Scott was, after all, a professor in an American university.

Mencken lambasts Scott, in the 1948 *Supplement II*. Mencken complains that during this time an unfortunate but common conception existed that "the only road to linguistic decency lay through [the] obliteration [of American speech] as in England, and the adoption of all the other refinements of Oxford English" (24). He continues, in order to connect Scott to this view,

This pronunciamento, despite its donkeyishness, was politely received in pedagogical circles, and so late as 1916, Fred Newton Scott was telling

the schoolma'ams, male and female, of the National Council of Teachers of English, that "almost everyone who touches upon American speech assumes that it is inferior to British speech."

Scott was wrong here, as he was wrong in other matters, for philologists of more weight than he had were already declaring for American autonomy in pronunciation (24, my italics).

Donald Stewart, in "Reputation Lost," a 1983 article in Menckiana,¹⁷ castigates Mencken and his readers for irresponsible scholarship and misrepresentation in the case of Scott. "Reputation Lost" is a delightful piece, not only because of its rich content about Scott and its important message about responsible scholarship, but also because of the rhetorical stance Stewart assumes as its author. Though I will be shortly discussing Stewart's extensive work on Scott, I will discuss "Reputation Lost" here because of the context.

The "modern novelist who was a careless scholar" mentioned by Stewart was Allan Seager, who wrote The Glass House: The Life of Theodore Roethke. Seager, when writing about the poet Roethke, describes his (Roethke's) experience in freshman rhetoric at Michigan.¹⁸ Stewart quotes Seager on Scott:

The teachers of writing or "Rhetoric" as it was then called, were proteges of Professor Fred N. Scott, who later achieved the left-handed dignity of a footnote making fun of him in Mencken's The American Language. He was a co-author of a textbook, Scott & Denney's Paragraph Writing, which was used in beginning Rhetoric classes. It was a dull, bad book and since Rhetoric was required of all freshmen, all had at least to own it.¹⁹ (1)

Stewart then says of Seager:

I am grateful to Seager for this thumbnail sketch of Fred Scott and his proteges because it would be difficult for me to find anywhere such a

concentrated misrepresentation of the life and influence of Michigan's greatest English teacher. Since those who read and commented on Seager's manuscript before it was published did not do their homework on this passage, I would like to do it for them. (1)

Stewart goes on to provide information that shows Seager and Mencken either did not know what they were talking about (Seager), or for some reason they intentionally, and therefore maliciously, misrepresented Scott, irrevocably damaging his reputation (Mencken).

Stewart explores Mencken's fourth edition of The American Language, in which he finds three references to Scott; only one is a footnote, which does not make fun of Scott. The second, a piece of the text Stewart cites as on page 410, is derogatory.

So late as 1916, Fred Newton Scott was telling the National Council of Teachers of English that "almost everyone who touches upon American speech assumes that it is inferior to British speech".... Scott was wrong here, as he was in other matters, for philologists of more weight than he were already declaring for American autonomy in pronunciation. (2)

Stewart puts Mencken's quotation of Scott in its context, the 1917 "Standard of American Speech," to show that Scott was not at all against American English, but for it. Stewart questions what purpose Mencken would have in "crediting Scott with attitudes precisely the opposite of those he really had" (3). He eliminates, as possible explanations, Mencken's misreading the text or relying only on someone else's word--the error resulting from either would have been corrected by the fourth edition of The American Language. Stewart concludes, from two other references in Mencken's writing, that Mencken just "did not like Scott" (3).

The first reference is Scott's denouncement of Mencken's "burlesque translation of the Declaration of Independence into American vulgate...as a crime against humanity, fit 'for the hair shirt and the lash, or tears of shame and self-abasement.'" This is a quote from Scott's 1919 Educational Review

evaluation of Mencken's The American Language. Stewart points out that Scott's statement is a rebuke not of American English but of Mencken's writing (3-4).

The second reference is in Mencken's Prejudices²⁰, where, amid great sarcasm and ridicule, Mencken says of Scott and his The Standard of American Speech and Other Letters and also of L. A. Sherman, "Such are two of the great whales of literary science among us. God help the poor yokels who have to sweat through their books! God help the national letters!" (4). Stewart's response:

I for one, would like to know why Mencken cites only three of the twenty-four essays in Scott's book, especially [sic] when these essays are the *least*, not the most, representative of Scott's concerns about the nature and function of language. His suggestion clearly is that Scott is a pedant buried in trivia.... It is an act of charity to say merely that Mencken misrepresents the substance of Scott's essay by his remarks.

Stewart identifies a possible reason for what he assumes is Mencken's intentional and malicious misrepresentation of Scott: Scott's unfavorable review of Mencken's first edition of The American Language. Stewart observes that

Mencken could have handled hostile criticism well. It is easier to mount the literary battlements, pen in hand, and have at it with the opposition. But what happens to a writer like Mencken who is patted on the head, told that he has written a delightfully entertaining book but one that cannot be taken seriously? I suspect Mencken never forgave Scott for that.... Mencken had a motive, if he sought one, for discrediting Scott, but his manner of doing so was either criminally careless or intellectually dishonest. (5)

It is this carelessness or dishonesty that Stewart writes his essay to decry. Returning to Seager, Stewart wonders how he, "on the staff of Scott's old

school, of all places, could treat him so casually and so disrespectfully. And so ignorantly" (8). Stewart's conclusion is quite memorable:

The real issue is that the thousands of people who have read Mencken and the thousands more, particularly students of modern poetry and Theodore Roethke, who have undoubtedly read Seager's book on the poet very likely have impressions of Fred Newton Scott based solely on the sketches of him in these works. And, as I have tried to show, the Scott of Seager's and Mencken's books, and the real Scott are vastly different people. *The lesson, then, is clear: in scholarship, as in life, one cannot play fast and loose with anyone's reputation.* (8, my italics)

The footnote Stewart didn't find, I did, and it is Mencken's most scathing comment on Scott, and reflects Mencken's problem with academic authority, mentioned above. The note, found in the 1945 *Supplement I*, reads, in part:

Scott, who died in 1930, was a completely humorless man and an almost archetypical pedagogue. He was a delegate to the unfortunate London conference in 1927. *He professed rhetoric at Ann Arbor for more than forty years and also taught journalism, though he knew no more about it than a child.* (134-135, my italics)

I add the italics to draw the reader's attention to journalist Mencken's assessment of Scott's knowledge of the field. I find it worth repeating here that Scott's "rapid writing" course is acknowledged the first American college course in journalism. Mencken's phrase, "he professed...at Ann Arbor," is an obvious play on words implying one can be in a position or claim to be something one is not. Mencken used the same phrase in *Prejudices*, "He has professed at the University of Michigan since 1887" (160). Stewart, in response to this quote, inserts: "An error; Scott began his teaching career there in 1889, a small point but yet one other showing Mencken's disdain for scholarly accuracy" (4). An additional evidence of this disdain is that Scott died in 1931, not 1930, as the above quotation asserts.

What can we learn from this look into past history-making? Stewart's charge for respectful and responsible scholarship still stands for us today, as we remake and reshape history through new discoveries such as those uncovered in this study. His assessment that Mencken and Seager have some part in the disappearance of Scott from the history helps explain how a highly influential and significant figure could become so marginalized. Despite the fact that in today's composition history, Fred Newton Scott is not well known, knowledge of him and his role in establishing our modern practice is becoming more widespread, due to the efforts of more respectful and responsible historiographers, as the next section shows.

Modern Composition Historiographers

The Good

Albert Kitzhaber

In 1953, Albert Kitzhaber wrote a doctoral dissertation on the history of rhetoric between 1850 and 1900, the definitive work on the history of composition in this period. The significance of Kitzhaber's work to this research has been evidenced through numerous references already made. Though published only recently (1990) in book form, this document has been an essential resource for students of composition history researching this era. Gage, in the introduction to the published version of Kitzhaber's dissertation says, "It may be overstating the case to say that Albert Kitzhaber's is the most-quoted unpublished dissertation since T. S. Eliot's, but in terms of the effect it has had on an entire field of research, its impact has been arguably far greater" (vii). It would be a tremendous oversight for a historical researcher of this period not to read or refer to Kitzhaber's work.

It is significant that Scott is one of Kitzhaber's "Big Four," the influential rhetorical theoreticians during this period. Besides Scott, Kitzhaber discusses in his text A. S. Hill, John F. Genung and Barrett Wendell, but concludes that "perhaps only Scott could be called an original theorist" (69).

While the other three, in Kitzhaber's opinion, really tried nothing new, "Scott...made a genuine effort to formulate a comprehensive system of rhetorical theory drawing on new developments in such related disciplines as experimental psychology, linguistics, and sociology" (69).

Kitzhaber comments on Scott's effectiveness as a teacher:

From 1904 to 1930, when the Department of Rhetoric was absorbed by the English Department, 140 master's degrees in rhetoric were awarded, and 23 doctorates. The popularity of Scott's program may be judged by the fact that in the same period only 25 doctorates were granted by the English Department. (72)

Kitzhaber also explores Scott's attitude toward the superficial correctness that came out of the Harvard school, which we have ultimately labeled current traditionalism:

His ideas often seemed strikingly unconventional to many people. Students coming to him who had been trained to look at language as primarily a matter of mechanical correctness found that Scott had a more functional view. Correctness was necessary but far from being the chief purpose of composition work. (71)

Kitzhaber identifies the origins of Scott's "organic" approach, Michigan's pyramidal educational structure, with which Scott "was in thorough agreement" (72). The organic approach, Kitzhaber says, was in contrast to Harvard's "feudal" plan.²¹

Kitzhaber provides key insight into the reasons why Scott, who stood in direct and often loudly voiced opposition to Harvard's influence on college and secondary school curriculums, did not have a greater effect as a reformer.

Scott chose not to break with tradition, but rather to find out what the tradition was, where it was going, and what his place in it was. "He had little patience with noisy reformers who would break with the past," a

friend wrote of him.... He wanted to retain what was still valid in traditional doctrine, but to use this as a foundation on which to build new theory. (71)

Kitzhaber concludes by showing that Scott's approach resulted in long-term ineffectiveness:

No man was more influential than Scott in the reform movement of the nineties, and no man offered more sensible leadership. His recommendations were always thoughtful, always conscious of the larger implications of rhetorical problems. He never advocated change merely for the sake of change, but, as a friend wrote of him after his death, "he kept an anchor in the past." He tried, though unsuccessfully, to secure the adoption of a fuller conception of rhetoric, one that would restore to it the great social importance that it has sometimes had in its long history. Unfortunately, English teachers were not ready then to adopt such a view. Instead, the narrower philosophy of the Harvard group won out, with the result that rhetorical instruction in America until well into the 1930s became, for all practical purposes, little more than instruction in grammar and the mechanics of writing, motivated almost solely by the ideal of superficial correctness. (73)

Kitzhaber's text is largely a discussion and comparison of the textbooks of the period. As each chapter discusses various aspects of composition instruction, Scott's collaborative efforts are shown by Kitzhaber to be progressive and significantly different from their peers.

Donald Stewart

Even more significant than the work of Kitzhaber in modern composition's retrieval of Scott as an important historical figure is the writing of Donald C. Stewart. Berlin says that "were it not for the efforts of Donald Stewart to reclaim him as part of our intellectual heritage, he would be unknown today" (1984 77). More than fifteen years of intensive research went

into at least eight published articles about Scott and several more that mention him. Below is an accounting of the words Stewart had to say about Scott in as brief a form as I am able to make. I have chosen a chronological arrangement because it gives an overall impression of the progress Stewart himself made as he continued his lifelong research of Scott, and shows how he incorporated new information into subsequent writings.

A number of generalizations may be made from these writings. First, *Stewart is clearly on Scott's side*. Because of his desire to right the terrible wrong that has occurred in our near omission of Scott from our history, Stewart always manages to bring up Scott's name, even in his non-Scott writings, such as "The Nineteenth Century." Second, and related to the first, *Stewart repeats many of the same facts and anecdotes about Scott* over and over again across his writings. It becomes evident Stewart believes that an important lesson has **not** been learned, needs to be learned, and only **can** be learned through as much repetition of essential content as Stewart can achieve, which is quite extensive. Third, and perhaps the reason behind the first two, *Stewart is convinced that the thinking and theorizing Scott did was important and useful*, and though it was largely ignored in his own time, it is relevant to and contemporary with modern thought. In other words, the story of Scott makes not only for good and necessary history, but Scott's contribution to **our** conversation is significant. He simply lived a century too soon.

In "The Barnyard Goose, History and Fred Newton Scott" (1978), Stewart says that the work of Scott is "a stunning example of contemporary ignorance about past composition teaching," and he observes that "we are still learning to be [Scott's] contemporaries" (17). Stewart looks at the works of Scott to show how "modern" his thinking was. The **social function** of language is found in Scott and Buck's 1905 A Brief English Grammar, as well as "the concept of **usage** reflected in Webster III which caused so much flak in 1961 and 1962" (15). A **descriptive** approach to linguistics is found in the 1916 essay, "A Standard of American Speech," where Scott says, "what are called the laws of good English are after all only...observed uniformities" (15). An

early proposal of our modern concern with writing **process over product** is found in the plant metaphor used extensively throughout Scott & Denney's 1897 Composition-Rhetoric. In the 1893 Paragraph Writing, Scott and Denney use an organic model in their attempt to construct a rhetoric of the paragraph. The idea for this comes from the science of their time, Stewart says, "yet we tend to think of an **interdisciplinary approach** to the composing process, as articulated by Janet Emig, for example, as distinctively modern" (16). "The **marking of errors** in students papers...doesn't reach the inward disease of which the errors are but outward symptoms," Scott observes in the 1922 essay, "English Composition as a Mode of Behavior," an insight Stewart believed to be the heart of Robert Zoellner's controversial 1969 *Talk-Write* monographs (16).

Stewart also quotes extensively from Scott and Denney's 1905 Aphorisms for English Composition, and the Class Hour in English Composition. One example:

The teacher's "Write naturally, be as spontaneous as you can," is as effective, and effective in about the same way, as the photographer's "now smile, please."

Never say to pupils, "Now, I want you to write something wholly original." So shape your teaching that all the originality the pupils have will rush to their fingers' ends. Never say to them, "I want you to be interested in this subject." Interest them. (17)

Stewart halts himself with the comment, "Believe me, the tendency to quote the entire book is very difficult to restrain" (17).

Stewart begins "Rediscovering Fred Newton Scott" (1979) with a quote from Scott and Joseph Denney's Elementary English Composition, which reflects great optimism: "Composition...has long been under a curse.... The old superstition...is surely passing. The time is at hand when the opportunities for scholarship and general culture in this branch of instruction will be generally recognized" (539). Stewart notes that, though their optimism was

understandable, "clearly, Scott and Denney were very bad prophets" (539).

Stewart provides a brief biography of Scott and traces the development of "the most extraordinary event of [his] professional career: the creation of the Department of Rhetoric at the University of Michigan" (540). Stewart speculates on the strain the secession from the English department must have caused its head, Isaac Demmon. He also comments on the inconsistencies in the telling of the story by Louis Strauss, a faculty member who participated in the occasion and one who stayed with the English department (541).

Stewart examines a pedagogical, a theoretical, and a philosophical work of Scott ("The Training of the Teacher," in Carpenter, Baker & Scott's 1908 The Teaching of English in the Elementary and the Secondary School; the 1922 "English Composition as a Mode of Behavior"; and the 1911 "The Two Ideals of Composition Teaching") to show that he blazed trails we are now RE-discovering, and to help readers "appreciate, in a limited way, how thoroughly modern he was" (543).

Stewart concludes his article, "as English teachers, we can also continue to wonder how this profession could lose track, for so long, of the work and achievements of one who once stood so tall among us" (547).

"Rhetorica Rediviva" (by Scott, edited by Stewart) is actually a speech which Scott delivered to the MLA in 1909 and which was never printed until Stewart edited it for publication in a 1980 CCC.²² I include it in this section because of the notes Stewart provides with his edition. In these notes, Stewart backgrounds Scott and "Rhetorica Rediviva," provides significant marginalia (Stewart's version is a conflation of the two drafts, one refined and precise, the other extensively referenced), shows the depth of his research by providing additional citations for Scott's sources, and shows how Scott's conclusions either did or did not come true in modern times by giving contemporary examples.

An example of this last is Scott's statement about usage:

Happily the day where the infinitive was split merely to make kindling for burning some philological martyr is rapidly passing. The study of

those differentiated modes of intercourse which we know as dialects and the application of sociological principles has induced a different temper, so that usages of speech which scholars were wont to debate with froth on their lips, may now be investigated as dispassionately as the hook-worm in the canals of Mass. (419)

Stewart's editorial comment:

Unfortunately, Scott was far too optimistic on this particular subject. Anyone familiar with the disputes which arose at the time *Webster III* was published in 1961, with the sarcasm attending attacks on CCC's resolution on *Student's Right To Their Own Language* in 1974, and with the continuing spate of relatively uninformed books on usage knows that on few matters are English-speaking people less inclined to be rational than on the subject of usage. (419)

Stewart never directed a writing program, so in "The Writing Program Director in the English Department Power Structure" (1981), he first establishes his own credentials in order to speak about the subject. He apprenticed under "two of the most knowledgeable composition men in the country," Albert Kitzhaber (at Kansas University) and Robert Pooley (at Wisconsin),²³ both of whom put "emphasis on the larger social aspects of instruction in rhetoric and relegat[ed] superficial mechanical correctness to a position of subordinate importance" (17).

Stewart extensively discusses the careers of these two writing program directors to make the point that in the English department power structure, the writing program was always considered less important than the "real" task of literature, and the writing program director was regarded and treated as a second-class citizen, even in schools (like Kansas and Wisconsin) that were progressive in these matters. But this is not Stewart's main point, only background for his thesis, that perceptions have now changed and "the freshman composition course is now the single most important economic factor in a department's survival" (18).

What is the Scott connection? Stewart, as usual, manages to insert his lesson on Scott while discussing Kitzhaber, who says that composition in the nineteenth century was attempting to address issues similar to those we now face. Their seeking, according to Kitzhaber, took the form of the question, "What sort of approach to rhetoric would accommodate itself to the new attitude that regarded education as a practical fitting for life in modern industrial society?" (17). The answers to Kitzhaber's question Stewart lists: surgery from emotion and traditional figures of speech, Barrett Wendell's Unity-Coherence-Emphasis formula, repetition as found in the daily theme, a literary approach consisting of rhetorical analysis of the masterpieces, Scott and Denney's paragraph as the central prose unit, and writing to fill social needs. "Running beneath all these theories, however, and stronger than any of them," says Stewart, "was the doctrine of mechanical correctness," which became the main concern of the twentieth century (17).

Stewart identifies each of these alternatives as only partial solutions, with one exception.

Scott...tried to create a new system of rhetorical theory drawing on the data of experimental psychology and linguistics. Scott's approach was fundamental, and, had it become popular, would have made the subsequent history of rhetorical theory far different from what it actually was. But Scott was ahead of his time. (17)

Stewart's conclusion, as stated above, is that the economic importance of freshman composition now makes our present situation very different from the earlier history out of which the current traditional paradigm was produced. Although it took a long time, Stewart is convinced that "writing program directors and their colleagues whose work is research in composition [will] achieve, by the turn of the century, parity with those already established in English departments" (18).

In "Two Model Teachers and the Harvardization of English Departments" (1982), Stewart conducts a discussion of the influence Harvard had in the shaping of college English departments during the last half of the nineteenth century, and the circumstances that caused the choices that were made. Especially interesting is the description of two Boylston Professors of Rhetoric (Channing and Child) who cared little about rhetoric, but instead wanted to study and teach literature. According to Stewart, Frances Child, Boylston Professor 1851-76, only bided this time trusting that "providence would provide something better" (120). "Providence," Stewart observes, "took its time" (120). Child ignored students, and concentrated on his research in literature, the significance of which Stewart acknowledges would be a mistake to underestimate. "He took a struggling elective subject and turned it into a major discipline," making him "the preeminent literary scholar in America" during this time.

Despite these advances for literature and English as a discipline, Stewart proposes that the corresponding long-term, negative influence of Harvardization on English composition is impossible to measure. He believes that "most members of our profession *still* perceive that their mission is to teach literature and that work in speech, linguistics, and rhetoric is either ancillary or intellectually inferior to work in literature" (121).

An influence countering that of Harvard, as indicated by his title, came from Stewart's favorite man, Fred Scott of Michigan. Stewart includes a selected list from Scott's bibliography ("there are 105 titles"), notes a "remarkable balance in [Scott's] academic interests," and extensively quotes from Kitzhaber to show that "Scott's reputation would ultimately rest on his distinctive contributions to rhetorical theory" (123).

In the 1985 Traditions of Inquiry, edited by John Brereton, Stewart wrote a chapter entitled "Fred Newton Scott," his most exhaustive discussion to date of the man from Michigan.

After several initial pages of informative biography,²⁴ Stewart, in order to facilitate a discussion of the publications of Scott, groups them into three categories: textbooks, academic articles on pedagogy and the state of the

profession, and rhetorical theory. In the first section, Stewart remarks about the research base undergirding Scott and Denney's Paragraph Writing.

[Scott and Denney] cite treatments of the paragraph that have influenced their thinking. And they note the only significant study of the paragraph in that era, Edwin Lewis's "The History of the English Paragraph," a doctoral dissertation that was subsequently published by the University of Chicago Press in 1894. My general point is that here we have a textbook, drawn not only from the authors' immediate practical experience of teaching, but thoroughly grounded in good scholarship and enriched theoretically by insights from another discipline. (31)

In the same section, Stewart discusses Scott's collaboration with Gertrude Buck on the 1905 A Brief English Grammar. He explores possible differences of opinion between the two authors on whether the fundamental unit of discourse was the **paragraph** (a position Scott takes in Paragraph Writing) or the **sentence** (the position represented in A Brief English Grammar, and one "very much in line with contemporary theory, which says that sentence competency is the basis of literacy" 34). Stewart speculates that this difference was possibly the reason that "entries in [Scott's] daybook at this time reveal that something about this collaboration was causing him distress" (34).

The second section, on Scott's pedagogy and views of the profession, Stewart divides into three sub-sections: "(1) his passionate commitment to the teaching of English; (2) his skepticism about the efficacy of college entrance requirements; (3) and the relevance of instruction of English in his time" (36). Stewart draws Scott's views on teaching from the 1908 The Teaching of English in the Elementary and Secondary Schools. "Everything Scott says here is as relevant today as it was in 1908," says Stewart (36).

Stewart discusses Scott's views on the second and third issues, entrance requirements and relevance of instruction, at the same time, since it was the former that interfered with the latter. Regarding these issues, Stewart

discusses Scott's articles from the early 1900s that were written in response to the Harvard reports of the 1890s. Scott's position was that Harvard's "feudal" system encouraged "arbitrary requirements, rigid conceptions of what good writing should be, and teaching that becomes coaching for passing entrance exams," which, Stewart says, had a "baleful effect on teachers, students, and the course" (38).

Stewart explores Scott's knowledge of ancient traditions of rhetoric, stating that Scott's own personal integrity made him far more sympathetic to the ethical issues raised by Plato than to the exposition of rhetoric as a science by Aristotle" (40).²⁵ Scott also took from Plato's Phaedrus his principle of organic unity, which became "the basis of his entire approach to the teaching of writing, the fundamental rationale for his argument that organic conceptions of structure were superior to mechanical" (41). Stewart remarks on Scott's awareness of the psychology of his time, using as his proof the 1922 "English Composition as a Mode of Behavior." His descriptive linguistic position is revealed in the fact that "twentieth century leaders in the movement for more liberal and scholarly attitudes toward usage--one thinks immediately of Sterling Leonard, Ruth Weeks, and Charles Fries--were graduate students in Scott's rhetoric program at Michigan early in the century" (43). Finally, Stewart says Scott's 1907 "The Genesis of Speech" was an "attempt to establish a link between normal physiological processes and the earliest meaningful human utterances" (43). This kind of broad approach to the application of language study was evident also in his interest in the patterns of and differences between prose and poetry, topics that dominated the papers he delivered to the MLA.

Stewart concludes his in-depth exploration of Scott with a by-now-familiar observation: "Strange that our profession lost track of a man of such distinction for so many decades" (44).

In "NCTE's First President and the Movement for Language Reform" (1986), Stewart surveys quite a number of Scott's writings to make the point that early in as well as throughout his career, Scott's attitude toward usage was compatible with that of our modern "scientific descriptive linguists."

Stewart finds this approach evidenced in an essay Scott wrote when he was still an undergraduate at Michigan. In "The Missing Pronoun," Scott explores the sensibility of using *they* and *them* for what he calls the ambiguous pronoun (he/she). In addition to this "modern" position on the matter²⁶ Stewart reports Scott's impatience with his contemporaries who were not like-minded (for example, A. S. Hill in the 1897 Foundations of Rhetoric), but instead thought that "maladies in student writing" and "symptoms of disordered expression" were in need of specific remedies.²⁷ Scott, on the other hand, viewed such maladies as normal, predictable parts of language learning, and continually "demonstrate[d] his concern for examining usage questions (which were a huge chunk of the diseases of expression that preoccupied Hill and those like him) in a rational and scientific way" (448).

In addition to the early "Missing Pronoun," Stewart mentions Scott and Buck's A Brief English Grammar, an 1896 MLA paper entitled "Diseases of English Prose: a Study in Rhetorical Pathology," "The Standard of American Speech," and "Verbal Taboos" as documents that address the issue of usage. Stewart contemporizes Scott for his reader by comparing his turn-of-the-century teaching to the controversial 1961 Webster's Third New International Dictionary, to Fred Cassaday's Dictionary of American Regional English,²⁸ and to Robert C. Pooley's 1946 The Teaching of English Usage.²⁹

Stewart includes some biographical material on Scott, mentioning Scott's high school teacher, William Jones, who introduced him to psychology, and, new to this essay, the years during Scott's college career which he spent in Cleveland working for a newspaper.³⁰ Stewart calls the reader's attention to Mencken's distortion of Scott's position on usage in The American Language (see above).³¹

Finally, I must make mention of one other text that Stewart wrote, one that an interested reader would not have access to. I had only begun to correspond with Stewart early this year, when he died from an infection contracted while taking a radiation treatment for the multiple myeloma that had plagued him for more than five years. His wife was kind enough to send to me the letter he wrote in response to my initial inquiry, which she found on his

computer after his death. His letter reflects many of the qualities of a good teacher interacting with a student, qualities that Stewart admired in Scott. He answered several of the questions I had raised in my letter to him, and assured me he was no "stuffy academic hiding in [an] ivory tower and occasionally admitting visitors" (1/24/92 1). Stewart offered to at least try to answer any questions I raised and commented on the extent of his research on Scott.

I have accumulated a mass of material on the man--about twenty notebooks full--and they include, in addition to materials from the Bentley's collection, interviews with his former students and two of his children, both of whom I regret to say have died recently, and I don't know what else. And I have spent a good many hours trying to read his handwriting. As you may have discovered, that is not a particularly easy thing to do. (1/24/92 3)

Stewart had begun a biography on Scott,³² and he told me he had another paper awaiting publication regarding Harvard's influence on English studies, in which he discusses Scott's involvement in the MLA matter of 1910-11. In an earlier letter to Virginia Allen, Stewart expressed pleasure at the idea of others taking up his "gospel" and said Scott "deserves an honored place in the history of our profession, one which has been denied him because he was rhetoric and not a lit man" (1/23/92 2).

A significant blow was dealt to modern composition historiographical research in the loss of Donald Stewart, the one person who perhaps knew Fred Newton Scott better than anyone else, except Scott himself.

Honorable mentions

More and more, the work of Kitzhaber and Stewart is showing fruit as Scott is becoming a mainstay in modern tellings of composition history. In 1991, Bizzell and Herzberg place Scott at the beginning of their brief account of progressive education in the early twentieth century and of the opposition of the Harvard influence of the late nineteenth. They say Scott "deplored the demotion of rhetoric and promoted an understanding of writing that

reemphasized self-expression and the adaptation of prose to its social purposes" (3).

Anne Gere also situates Scott opposite Harvard and mentions his attitude toward students in a 1985 article. Citing from Scott's 1909 "What the West Wants," Gere states:

Not only does Scott approach the student writing with sympathy (sensitive to the "indecently exposed" language), but he raises completely different questions. Instead of sharing the Harvard committee's interest in administrative issues... Scott concerns himself with the student writers ("genuine individuals") and the processes they engage in ("What were they trying to do? What motives lay behind?"). (114)

Connors, Ede and Lunsford also cite "What the West Wants" to show Scott at least had the potential to influence American higher education toward his organic point of view, what they saw was a "more classical rhetorical model" (4). In the end, they of course conclude,

the Harvard model--with its emphasis on uniform and standardized entrance examinations and its thinly veiled contempt for the public schools--prevailed, contributing directly to the rage for correctness which so undermined the traditional goals and functions of classical rhetoric. (5)

Connors elsewhere lists Scott with Alexander Bain "and perhaps Barrett Wendell" as one of the greatest figures in writing (1981 453). Connors states that although Scott's "influence was limited," his "progressive theoretical work" can "stand beside Campbell in the eighteenth century or Burke in the twentieth" (1981 453). And in 1984, Connors states that in our contemporary situation, "we still fight the battles for respect begun by Fred Newton Scott in the 1890's" (160).

The Bad

Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg

Despite their inclusion in the previous section, Bizzell and Herzberg inaccurately attribute to Scott connections that he did not have. In their 1990 The Rhetorical Tradition, Bizzell and Herzberg link Scott to behavioral psychology, citing for their evidence his 1922 "English Composition as a Mode of Behavior" (665). Allen, in a review of Rhetorical Tradition, identifies this error and more accurately traces Scott's theoretical debt to John Dewey's functionalism.

It is a matter of some importance that although Bain used the term *faculties*, he was not a faculty psychologist, and that although Scott used the term *behavior*, he was not a behaviorist. (211)

James Berlin

Berlin earlier supported Allen's position in Writing Instruction in Nineteenth Century American Colleges, where Scott garners an entire chapter as the "alternative voice" to current traditional rhetoric. Berlin correctly asserts that Scott was "operating within the philosophical structure of American Pragmatism, especially as found in William James and the early John Dewey" (77). However, because of his agenda, Berlin traces Scott's theoretical base to Emerson. He says that "reality, for Scott, is a social construction" (77-78). Berlin remarks on Scott's "Mode of Behavior":

Scott has summarized the significance of Emerson's thought on language, without the superstructure of philosophical idealism. Earlier, Gertrude Buck, a student of Scott and then a collaborator, had applied a variation of Emerson's theory of metaphor to rhetoric. Both Scott and Buck throughout rely on view of reality as a linguistic construct arising out of a social act, an interaction among communicator, audience and language. (80)

But about this association, Stewart has this to say:

The problem, briefly, is that Berlin traces Scott's intellectual origins to Emerson when, in fact, they were in German transcendental philosophy, to which he was introduced by William Jones, first president of Indiana State University, when Scott was a student in the university's lab schools. Berlin's mistake is an understandable one because at the time he wrote his monograph these facts about Scott were not yet known. (152)

Berlin also stretches the connection between social construction theory (what he calls Epistemic Transactionalism) and Scott's perspective. Scott was indeed a pioneer in social theory, but that is a far cry from the social constructionism of our day.

"After considering Scott's theoretical statements about rhetoric," Berlin states, "his textbooks are a little disappointing" (81). Berlin is perhaps too close to his own perspective and too far removed from Scott's immediate situation. In retrospect it is easy to see the failings of the current traditional paradigm, and also how Scott's real thinking opposed it. In his time, however, it doesn't look like Scott drew as many theoretical lines as he did practical ones.

Katherine Adams and John Adams

Adams and Adams make an even worse error than Berlin when they ally Scott **with Harvard** in order to attribute to him (as well as A.S. Hill and Barrett Wendell) the origins of the current traditional paradigm. Adams and Adams implicate Scott in prescriptivism due to the 1891 Paragraph Writing, a composition textbook he wrote with Joseph V. Denney. Adams and Adams only briefly describe how Scott and Denney are rule based and modes based in their use of the paragraph as a compositional unit.

Scott and Denney thus showed teachers how to relate the forms of discourse rules to the paragraph, and they also suggested means of

development, like comparison or causal analysis, which would come to be thought of as the modes of exposition. (427)

Adams and Adams then discuss at length the progressive theory of Scott, developed in the high point of his career, comparing the thinking of Scott to that of contemporary theorists such as Richards, Shaughnessy, Graves and Britton. Despite these parallels to modern thought, Adams and Adams ultimately criticize Scott because "these attitudes directly contradict his freshman text, written for a course that Scott stopped teaching" (428). Indeed, their main gripe is that "he turned his attention to the advanced classes and the graduate work...instead of directing his attention to the freshman sections employing his Paragraph Writing and his Grammar Handbook written with Gertrude Buck, both of which were frequently reissued" (427).

That Scott's thinking and his actions, the way he went about carrying out those thoughts, can be seen as inconsistent at first glance, I do not disagree. And Scott certainly missed a tremendous opportunity to influence composition studies at a crucial moment in our history, as I discuss below. However, he is certainly misrepresented when allied with Harvard in bringing about the mechanical approach to composition studies.

In reality, he positioned himself and his later work against the Harvardization of English with a vehemence unrecognized by Adams and Adams. And his social, organic (versus "feudal") conception of composition was presented to and preserved through students who would and did have a tremendous influence on composition study later in the century, people like Sterling Leonard, Edwin Miller and Ruth Weeks.

Adams and Adams' scenario (of a Department head of Scott's era devoting his efforts to freshman English) smacks of an ideal we can only construct in hindsight and manifests an ignorance of Scott's context and the many other areas of study and thought that occupied his attention at the time.

The Indifferent

At this point it almost seems, as Stewart says in "Reputation Lost," like a "tempest in a teapot" to complain about places where Scott was **not mentioned** or significantly acknowledged. However, such cases are further proof of Scott's obscurity only recently, and it is a notable oversight on the part of these writers to have excluded Scott or to have marginalized him in their historical accounts.

Arthur Applebee and J. N. Hook

Scott suffers from briefness of coverage in two important NCTE accounts of composition history, Arthur Applebee's 1974 Tradition and Reform in the Teaching of English: A History and J. N. Hook's 1979 A Long Way Together. Applebee does make several references to Scott, but these are largely indirect mentions, Scott's name simply listed with those of Carpenter and Baker as authors of The Teaching of English. Applebee most important mention of Scott is in a footnote, where he discusses the 1914 "Undefended Gate," in which Scott called for a "newspaper week."

The first Council committee on speech was headed by Scott, and later by Claudia E. Crumpton. It was under Crumpton that the committee issued a *Guide to Better Speech Week* (1919). This was apparently highly successful but drew criticism from the organizations of teachers of speech, who thought the Council was intruding in their areas. (74)

Although Scott is seen occupying the "chair" at NCTE's charter meeting in J. N. Hook's important NCTE text, A Long Way Together, Scott, the only NCTE president to serve two terms, is almost completely obscured in the text by stories of Hosic, Hatfield, and others. Since Scott's influence on the NCTE was tremendous, both directly through his activities and writings and indirectly through his students who played major leadership roles,³³ it seems curious that he is dealt with so sparingly in Hook's text.

Ken Donelson

The omission of Scott from Donelson's list of "Beacon Lights in the History of English Teaching" is a thundering silence. Donelson, with a stated purpose similar to my own,³⁴ confidently constructs an "English Teaching Hall of Fame, pre-1950 division," which includes Sterling Leonard and Ruth Weeks, but not their teacher (233). How can you talk at length about the Harvard committee reports without referencing Scott's quadruple outcry against them? How can you discuss at length the creation of the NCTE, listing important "articles in the English Journal's first year" without even mentioning Scott or the articles he wrote for English Journal? Finally, it is clear that Donelson knew about Scott, because Carpenter, Baker and Scott's Teaching of English finds its way into Donelson's end matter.

I agree with Donelson's sentiment:

We ought to know the heroes of English teaching, people who dedicated their lives to English teaching and improving the profession, people who left imprints behind. (222)

But Donelson "ought to know" about Scott.

In all fairness, it should be said that these texts were written all in the 1970's, before the effects of Kitzhaber and Stewart were widely felt. Additionally, the history of the NCTE (as well as the journal for which Donelson wrote) has been with secondary schools and not colleges. Indeed, from the high school teacher's point of view, the primary problem of Scott's time was *college* entrance requirements. In one of his incidental mentions, Applebee notes almost with pride that Scott was only an advisor to the New York Association's Round Table Committee, precursor to NCTE. He says, "Hosic was the only college representative, and even he was from a two year school" (51).

CHAPTER III. SCOTT'S CONTRIBUTION

Then and now: Scott on Scott

Amid these words said about Scott, one wonders what Scott's reaction would be to them and to our attempt to rekindle interest in his ideas a century later. In two places among the Fred Newton Scott Papers, I found Scott himself identifying what he thought his contribution might be and what he hoped to be remembered for.

In a brief autobiographical note,³⁵ perhaps in anticipation of our interest, Scott wrote about himself:

His principal aims as teacher and investigator have been to improve the teachings of English Compositions in schools and colleges and to lay a scientific foundation for the advanced study of rhetoric. He was among the earliest to establish special courses for the training of teachers of English composition and the first to introduce Rhetoric as a graduate study.

These two things, teaching and rhetorical theory, seem to surface again and again as Scott's major contributions to our discipline.

Dean Effinger of Michigan sent a letter to Scott on April 14, 1927, asking Scott's recommendations regarding his replacement as head of the department of rhetoric. Scott pencilled the following, which reveals his own perspective on his contribution:³⁶

The sort of person I have in my own mind for the place is one who is interested in literary criticism and is actually doing original research in some of the _____ of that field and who is able to survey the work in English Composition as in some sense a part of that territory. That is the thing which I have tried to stress in my own teaching, especially in the training of candidates for the doctor's degree. This is the one idea

which for good or ill I think I may claim as my own, and the best example that I have ever had was Miss Gertrude Buck of Vassar. Buck-such pupils are rare.

This self-assessment was made late in Scott's career, and reflects an attempt he made all throughout it, to build a solid relationship between two parts of a growing discipline in an attempt to prevent their being fractured from each other.

Scott's Contribution

The cooperation between composition and literature is what Scott considered his greatest lesson, a lesson that could certainly find application in our contemporary situation. It is one of the philosophies found in a text by Scott that serves as the fullest expression of his views regarding what was required for good teaching, "The Teacher and His Training," part two of Carpenter, Baker and Scott's 1908 The Teaching of English in the Elementary and the Secondary School. A look at "The Teacher and His Training," and a comparison of that instruction to the example of Scott as a teacher himself, will serve to show that one of Scott's greatest contributions was what he taught about being a teacher.

Teaching

In "The Teacher and His Training," Scott was convinced that the teaching of English, or any subject for that matter, required special talent on the part of the instructor. While "a passion and aptitude" was necessary, Scott also recognized that talent alone did not guarantee success (306).

Unaided, it will soon reach its limit. It cannot attain to its highest efficiency without submitting itself to a severe and protracted discipline. (307)

The discipline of training serves less to give the teacher knowledge of the subject of English (though it does that) than for the teacher to attain **self-knowledge**. Proper training, according to Scott, will reveal the teacher's own powers and limitations, and make the teacher more resourceful.

Scott discussed general qualifications necessary for all English teachers and also qualifications specific to the teaching of rhetoric and composition, grammar, and literature. The first general requisite for Scott is "the ability to speak and write the English language with clearness, accuracy, and freedom from bookishness" (308). Scott warns that ability to use good English did not connote one particular or appropriate style, especially what he condemns as "schoolmaster's English" (309). He quotes Samuel Thurber:

How often has it been my experience to have spoken to a pedagogic audience on some topic that I deemed important, and to find, when the question was opened for discussion, that I had before me the task of defending my pronunciation or my syntax instead of my thesis. (308)

The results of such affectation, "the mastery of this iron-jointed dialect, or rather the being mastered by it," says Scott, are "hideous artificial flowers of rhetoric, anecdotes of questionable propriety, and sometimes humour approximating to horse-play" (309). Scott suggests that with a little work, a teacher plagued by such error can soon be rid of it.

The second general qualification for an English teacher is a knowledge of English literature. This is attained by "a careful survey of the entire field," taking care not to "mistake vague recollections of the utterances of critics, more or less eminent, for acquaintance with the works themselves" (310). Again, teachers can cultivate this characteristic on their own, through both appreciative and critical reading.

Scott's final general requirement for good teaching, "even in the elementary grades," is knowledge of a foreign language.

It is a commonplace of education that the mother-tongue can be understood and appreciated only by those who have made some

progress in an alien tongue; and if the knowledge of one foreign tongue is good for the teacher, a knowledge of two is still better. (313)

Scott lists two specific qualifications necessary for teaching rhetoric and composition. The first reflects Scott's insight into the real teaching situation:

The most important, or at any rate the least dispensable, is skill in reading and correcting themes.... So much of the teacher's happiness and success depends on this knack that it must be set down as a *sine qua non*. (314)

Scott warns that if the potential teacher finds theme reading "slow, irksome, and depressing...he is out of his element and he cannot by any possibility be entirely successful in this field unless he can employ some one else to do the correcting for him or haply can devise some method, as yet unguessed, by which essay correcting may be done away with" (314-315).³⁷ Scott does provide some relief for the concerned reader by stating a now familiar premise of his instruction, that even a small amount of natural aptitude can be cultivated through a systematic effort. The third and final section of Scott's lesson is also devoted to essay-correcting which, he admits, is a practice in ill-repute.

The teacher of composition who appears on the street or the campus with a bundle of essays under his arm is greeted by his friends with pitying smiles and expressions of sympathy. If he ventures to demur, as he sometimes does, and to affirm that he is still an optimist and on the whole rather enjoys this kind of work, the look of pity slowly changes to one of rapt astonishment, to be succeeded in turn by shouts of laughter. He must be joking. That any one should actually derive pleasure from the correction of school compositions is too much for human credulity. (327-328)

Scott argues that the problems that go with essay correcting are not intrinsically evil, but more often the result of unfavorable conditions. He offers several solutions, yet concludes that it is likely the lot of composition teachers to be habitually overworked. In such a case, Scott charges the teacher to recognize that the object of correcting papers is not primarily to develop student facility in language as much as to develop student character. This can be accomplished if correction is done individually, constructively, rationally, systematically, and with the generous exercise of common sense.

The second qualification for the composition teacher is scholarship in the history and theory of rhetoric. Scott recognizes this kind of training also has a bad name, "on the ground that the teacher who has made a profound study of rhetorical theory will be disposed to unload his erudition on the class" (315). This result is **not** inevitable, Scott argues, but even if it were, "ignorance of one's subject is no proper safeguard in the classroom" (315).

Above all, a thorough-going study of rhetoric absolves the teacher from the finicalness and intolerance, characteristic indeed of the sciolist in any line of thought, but peculiarly characteristic of the sciolist in rhetoric.³⁸ (316)

The teacher of grammar also needs special preparation to counteract grammar's reputation of being "the worst-taught subject in the English curriculum" (316). Scott's three items are topics he developed later in speeches made to the MLA, in "Genesis of Speech," and in "Composition as a Mode of Behavior":

(1) the study of the development of the English language from the earliest times to the present; (2) a study of the general principles of comparative philology, or the science of language; (3) a study of the psychology of speech.

The second of these three will "free the student from a superstitious reverence for grammatical rules, and give him an insight into the true nature of usage

and idiom" (316-317). The last will bring to the teacher an awareness of "the child-mind at different stages of its development" (317).

The literature teacher must go farther along lines Scott generally recommended in the study of classics and literary history. Additionally, the literature teacher should be acquainted with underlying principles of literary criticism. Scott thought that the study of comparative literature was an important new subject, one worthy of the literature teacher's attention.

After discussing the necessity of training, Scott explores the philosophy behind making assignments and then essay-correcting, as has already been mentioned. In the middle section, Scott shows amazing concern for the needs of the student as well as the teacher. The subject of the student's writing must be interesting to both, for, Scott reminds, "after the essays are written they must be read" (322). Indeed, Scott recommends substituting the word *interest* for *subject* for a different perspective, but, he cautions, it must be **healthy interests** that are encouraged in the student.

Scott's concern for good teaching can be found in many of his other writings. In "Our Problems," for example, his president's address to the NCTE in 1912, Scott discussed a standardized scale developed by a "Dr. Hillegas" for grading compositions. The scale was intended to test and evaluate efficiency of teaching composition by assembling a ten-point selection of compositions which represented a standard range of ability, from worst to best. The teacher simply compared the student's composition to the list, found which item on the scale it most resembled, and assigned a grade accordingly. Though an advocate of science himself, Scott advised "caution and deliberation," when considering such "scientific" methods (4).

The truth is that the problems of teachers are not problems of pure science but problems of the spirit. The student's composition, as the teacher should look at it, is the expression of the student's life. To evaluate it is to evaluate life itself in one of its most delicate manifestations. When, however, applying to it a scale such as this, we strip it of its individual character and reduce it to an abstraction, we

excise at one stroke the most significant and essential features....
Whenever a piece of machinery is allowed to take the place of
teaching...the result will be to artificialize the course of instruction. (4)

In "English Composition as a Mode of Behavior," Scott showed a concern for encouraging the interests the student already had instead of discouraging the student by simply viewing teaching as pointing out errors in their writing. Scott's "Marks and Remarks" speech (see Miller, chapter two) showed he had a respect and interest in the student as a personality, despite any faults and weaknesses that might be evident. In "What the West Wants," Scott showed again that he was interested in the student writer and in what the student was trying to do when engaged in the process of writing.

Scott's own example in the classroom, his popularity as a teacher, his wide-ranging and extensive knowledge in many subjects and languages, his awareness of the relationship of rhetoric to other disciplines, his challenging method of engaging the student, infecting them with a driving, life-long interest of their own, all of these are evidence that Scott practiced the policies he preached. They are also proof of the efficacy of his philosophy. Teachers today can still learn much from Scott.

Rhetoric and Composition

It has been shown that one authority on nineteenth century rhetoric, Albert Kitzhaber, thought that Scott's real contribution was to be found in his rhetorical theory. This was also the opinion of Scott's contemporary, close friend and collaborator, Gertrude Buck. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Scott himself believed that one of his principal goals was to lay a scientific foundation for the advanced study of rhetoric, and that being first to introduce Rhetoric as a graduate study was a noteworthy achievement.

In our day, rhetoric is enjoying a rediscovery and a reapplication to the practice of teaching composition (Connors, Ede & Lunsford). In 1909, Scott was already asking his hearers to rekindle an interest in the ancient study of rhetoric. "Rhetorica Rediviva" is a "plea for the revival of rhetoric as a science"

(413). He has in mind graduate study, not the public school. He wishes to recommend the teaching of Plato, who has mistakenly, "from the earliest times been regarded as rhetoric's uncompromising enemy" (415).

Plato did, indeed, pour out the vials of his scorn upon the rhetoric of his day, but a careful reading of the Gorgias and the Phaedrus will show that while he castigates the false rhetoric, he holds up in contrast to it the ideal of a true and worthy science" (415).

This science was one Scott spent his entire life attempting to advance.

What are some of the features of Scott's rhetoric? How does what he suggested fit into our modern views of what comprises rhetoric? It has already been shown that Stewart, in "The Barnyard Goose," listed several of Scott's concepts that seem to fit with our modern point of view, including an interdisciplinary approach and the social function of language. In "Rhetorica Rediviva," Scott also recommended a social model for composition.

Plato takes what we should now call the social or sociological point of view..., in Plato's words, "the training and improvement in the souls of the citizens" (415)

Scott names **organic** unity as Plato's central principle of form. Another concept that shows up in the writing of Scott is that of **community**. In 1916 Scott published an essay entitled "Speech and the Community," which contains the following:

The speech of each one of us is molded by the community in which he lives. We speak not as we like, but as our environment compels us to speak. Long before we are able to take thought for ourselves, our speech habits are fixed almost beyond control by our parents, our playmates, our neighbors, and our teachers. We may, indeed, acquire a different mode of speech in later life, but it will be acquired with difficulty, it will never seem so much a part of us as the speech of our earliest years, and

it will desert us shamelessly in moments of excitement or embarrassment. (33)³⁹

The rhetoric of Scott sounds contemporary, but perhaps his real achievement was his overall conception of rhetoric as a unified science relevant to and dependent on the rest of language study and the world. In 1985, Stewart named the three large purposes that informed Scott's work in rhetorical theory:

- (1) his attempt to ground composition theory and practice in the rhetorical tradition from which it had become separated and to determine what in that tradition was still relevant to the modern world;
 - (2) his attempt to enrich rhetorical theory with insights from other disciplines, particularly linguistics and psychology; (3) his interest in enlarging the nature and scope of inquiries into the uses of language.
- (1985a 40)

Scott promulgated the idea that separation and specialization, the direction that the American university took in our century and which it continues to take today, can do as much harm as good. English, Scott would say, is made up of reading **and** writing, of composition and literature (as well as linguistics, etc.), and the two should encourage and support one another. Rhetoric, Scott would say, touches on many disciplines in the academy,⁴⁰ such as English, Psychology, Philosophy and Science, and these many, separated disciplines should encourage and support one another. Language, Scott would say, is a universal matter, and individuals across the world that speak a historically similar tongue, such as British people and American, should encourage and support one another in their study of language. Were Scott alive today, he certainly would renew his appeal for cooperation and collaboration, and doing so, this century-old rhetorician would certainly fit into the new century that approaches us.

Conclusion: A Missed Opportunity

There exists an irony implicit in the Fred Newton Scott story that must be dealt with before this study is done. Scott had an approach to rhetoric that sounds progressive enough to be directly relevant to our modern views of composition theory and practice. He lived and taught during the American university's adolescence and during the birth of the English department and writing program in those universities. His message should have had a tremendous impact on what has become the discipline of composition teaching. Yet, soon after his retirement and death, Scott's program of study of rhetoric at Michigan was shut down and Scott and his message were forgotten. What happened? Was there something about Scott that we still don't know that had an adverse effect on his teaching? What explanation exists for the lack of real influence exerted by Scott on our discipline?

It seems clear that Scott had plenty of opportunity. He lived in a climate of change. The end of our century provides an occasion for us to critically review our past and carefully set into motion actions that will affect our future. Scott lived in a similar era. He had a handle on the situation of his time, a vast knowledge and extensive involvement in many areas of study, and an unparalleled awareness of American rhetoric by means of a famous graduate program and involvement in professional organizations and journals. Scott evidenced in his writings that he saw what was happening to composition, and what the result would be. He had an audience of students and colleagues and a platform from which to deliver his message. So what happened?

Kitzhaber believes the English teachers of Scott's day were simply not ready to adopt Scott's "fuller conception of rhetoric, one that would restore to it the great social importance that it has sometimes had in its long history" (73).

Though he met with some success for a time in the 1890s, most of his ideas were too new, his recommendations for change too fundamental to be generally accepted. Rhetorical instruction fell in behind the Harvard group instead, with the result that the brief flare of activity in the

nineties that for a time looked so promising was quickly extinguished, and both theory and practice were once more narrowed and cut off from those relations that supply rhetoric with a realistic function. (70)

The movement toward what we now view in retrospect was already too extensive for Scott to have stopped it, even if he had been more strident.

Ironically, Scott's own manner and philosophy, as well as his actions, perhaps ended up working against the revolutionary character of his message. In manner, Scott's approach was one of non-interference. Kitzhaber says Scott's "recommendations were always thoughtful, always conscious of the larger implications of rhetorical problems" (73).

Scott chose not to break with tradition, but rather to find out what the tradition was, where it was going, and what his place in it was. "He had little patience with noisy reformers who would break with the past," a friend wrote of him.... He wanted to retain what was still valid in traditional doctrine, but to use this as a foundation on which to build new theory. (71)

Although Scott had an acute insight on the problem and an at times fiery condemnation of the parties responsible, the kind of stridence necessary to bring about change would have been out of character for him, contradictory to his own philosophy of cooperation. Feminism and other inductive approaches to reasoning today face a challenge similar to the one Scott had.

In practice, Scott's establishment of a separate department of Rhetoric at the University of Michigan may have worked against the spread of rhetoric as a legitimate discipline in its own right. Scott's rhetoric, like his whole life, touched on every discipline. On a theoretical level, the question thus arises, is it really legitimate to study rhetoric independent of the highly pragmatic topics it serves to communicate? Might the result not be a kind of "meta-rhetoric" that would quickly become highly esoteric, detached and unrealistic, and therefore meaningless?

On a more practical level, it is also possible to see that Scott's attention to his own rhetoric department at Michigan perhaps interfered with his attention to larger, national matters of rhetoric. When the MLA closed down their phonetic and pedagogical sections in Ann Arbor in 1903, Stewart observes:

One may wonder why Scott did not oppose this move vigorously. One would think that he would have, but there is no evidence, either in the MLA Proceedings for 1903 or in his personal papers, of any suggestion that he did. One possible reason is that, in 1903, when Scott created the Department of Rhetoric at Michigan, he felt he had, at last, a means by which he could freely explore, develop, and disseminate his theoretical and practical ideas about rhetoric and the teaching of composition.
(1985b 744)

Perhaps by making the choice to concentrate on his work and students at Michigan, Scott reduced his influence on the larger picture. It is also possible that by Scott's great characteristic, his wide base of knowledge in many disciplines, served to spread him too thinly and to reduce his influence in any one of them.

Fortunately, Scott's innovative thinking and progressive rhetoric were preserved through his students and their subsequent influence on such organizations as the NCTE, and through the medium he spent so much time thinking and teaching about—his writing.

ENDNOTES

1 See note 34 below.

2 Scott's title was changed to Professor of Rhetoric and Journalism in 1921.

3 He would continue this theme in later papers, "What the West Wants in Preparatory English" School Review 1909, and "Our Problems" English Journal 1913.

4 See Chapter Three for evidence of this.

5 All these are reprinted in The Standard of American Speech and Other Papers.

6 The MLA closed down both highly pragmatic sections, the pedagogical and the phonetic, that year. Stewart reports that the result of this action was that, by 1920, papers on composition and rhetoric disappeared entirely from MLA programs, supplanted by interests in literature (745). It is ironic that the convention at which these actions took place was conducted in Ann Arbor.

7 However, Stewart says that "there is no connection between this event and the founding of NCTE" (Letter 1/24/92 1).

8 Page number references for "Genesis of Speech" are taken from the 1926 volume The Standard of American Speech and Other Papers.

9 Page number references for "Two Ideals of Composition Teaching" are taken from The Standard of American Speech and Other Papers.

10 H. L. Mencken's misrepresentation of Scott's position is discussed in Chapter Two.

11 He had also traveled abroad, as Georgia Jackson's letter in the above note indicates, in 1920.

12 Stewart explains as follows:

In 1960, Warner Rice, then Head of Michigan's English Department, called for the abolition of Freshman English. It seems incredible that the school which had produced American rhetoric's greatest teacher and scholar should also produce the loudest exponent of the abolition of composition. (1979 542)

In a footnote, Stewart says that Rice's article was published in College English (21:361-373), followed by the "other side," presented by Albert Kitzhaber.

Stewart remarks that it is significant "that while Rice's remarks got rather wide distribution at the time, they were too seldom accompanied by those of Albert Kitzhaber, who knew of Scott's work and what composition teaching could and should have been. The priorities were well fixed in 1960" (542).

13 Concerning Stewart's feelings about the reliability of Dewey's information on Scott, see note 24 below.

14 Stewart, in his footnote 12 in "Two Model Teachers" says,

In the 31 March 1927 letter [Rankin] refers to [O.J.] Campbell as "unscrupulous through and through" and to Michigan as suffering an era of "Harvardizing and Wisconsinizing and Eastern-Boarding-schoolizing." (128)

Campbell was a Harvard man that came into the Michigan English department, gained some measure of leadership, and proposed amalgamation of the two departments after Scott left.

15 Miller is inaccurate in at least one instance of dating Scott's publications, and he varies greatly from Stewart and Kitzhaber in determining when Scott was promoted at Michigan.

16 This course is named by Kitzhaber and others as the first journalism course in American colleges (Kitzhaber 70).

17 Menckeniana is a journal not likely read by most contemporary teachers and students of composition; it is dedicated to preserving and exploring every tidbit of Mencken and his writing.

18 Seager's book was written while he was an instructor at the University of Michigan. Stewart wonders "how Seager, on the staff of Scott's old school, of all places, could treat him so casually and disrespectfully. And so ignorantly.... He was in Ann Arbor where he had access to the Fred Newton Scott Papers and books by Scott which would have alerted him to his own errors and Mencken's distortions" (8).

19 Stewart writes further, "Roethke apparently called these instructors "soil" guys from their use of the analogy between the growing plant and the developing work of art. Seager agrees with Roethke that it was a "bum analogy" and notes:

The reference is to a principle of organic unity in writing...which Scott got from a reading of Plato's Phaedrus and Herbert Spencer's Principles of Economy. In matters of the aesthetics of structure, if I have to choose between Seager on the one hand and Plato, Herbert Spencer, and Scott on the other, I have no difficulty taking sides (1).

20 Six volumes of this work were published between 1919-27; Mencken's attack comes from the sixth volume.

21 The main discussion of organic vs. feudal methods is in the 1901 "College Entrance Requirements."

22 Two versions of "Rhetorica Rediviva" are found in the microfilmed Fred Newton Scott Papers among Scott's class lecture notes. Stewart believed it may have been used in Scott's rhetoric history and theory class at Michigan.

23 The fact that Stewart studied under both Kitzhaber and Pooley seems significant to his interest in Scott (Pooley was a student of Sterling Leonard, who was a student of Scott).

24 The information Stewart includes here is more extensive than his early articles on Scott; Stewart, in a footnote, mentions John Dewey's 1894 sketch of Scott, but expresses concern with "inconsistencies" it contains, and is thus reluctant to supplement his account with it.

For example, Dewey, who must have got his information from Scott (his younger colleague at Michigan in the early 1890s), says that Scott received his education in the public schools of Terre Haute. But he also reports Scott's early interest in science and then his growing interest in languages and classical studies stimulated by his German teacher at the Normal School. It is not clear to me whether Dewey and Scott used "public" and "normal" synonymously or whether they were different institutions. And I cannot account for the fact that Scott apparently did not mention [William] Jones to Dewey, especially because of Dewey's involvement in that subject. (44-45, footnote 3)

25 This distinction between the teachings, and our application of them, of the two ancients is conveyed in the 1911 "Two Ideals of Composition Teaching."

26 Due to influence of the equal rights movement, we think it necessary to be concerned with the issue of the generic pronoun, but it seems strange to realize the problem has been around for at least 100 years!

27 Remedies which Hill listed in his text. Stewart reminds us, "We must remember that Hill was the creator of Freshman Composition at Harvard and a powerful influence there and on all programs that imitated the Harvard model" (447).

28 Stewart says Cassaday's concern is that television is going to have a levelling effect on regional and local speech patterns. No date is given; Stewart implies it is forthcoming.

29 Stewart mentions Pooley in a discussion of Scott's "influence" (through an undomineering teaching method) on his students, which included Sterling Leonard, Pooley's graduate mentor. Although his views on usage were similar to those of Scott, Pooley, as Stewart also says in "Two Model Teachers," "was unaware of the Scott connection" (Stewart 1982 128).

30 This information is from John Dewey, which Stewart was reluctant to use in "Fred Newton Scott;" see note 24 above.

31 Curiously, Stewart says Scott in "The Missing Pronoun" acknowledges the possibility of using the generic pronoun, "hesh, thon, le, and other candidates for admission to the English dictionary," only to show Scott's own preference (and that of "the general public") was to use "they" (444-445). To add another chapter to "Reputation Lost," Mencken, in yet another version of The American Language (Edition Four Supplement II, 1948, page 370), accuses Scott of advocating "hesh" in his 1927 article ("The New American Language," Forum, page 754). Stewart seems unaware of the connection, but that writing would have been forty-two years after Scott wrote "The Missing Pronoun."

32 In a letter to Virginia Allen, Stewart says,

I have written over 1500 pages of a frist draft of this book and have become so familiar with Mr. Scott that I could tell you what he does every other Wednesday evening, who his associates are and what he thinks of them, and what he's reading and writing. I feel as if I've moved into the Scott household for an indefinite period of time.

Unfortunately, I will not live to see the completion of this work. More

remains to be done, but I am showing my wife, who is also on our staff here and is an excellent scholar and writer, what method I've evolved and what yet remains to be done. I will keep going as long as I can and let her finish it up (1/23/92 2).

33 See Applebee's Appendix VI, which lists Miller (1918), Leonard (1926), Fries (1928), and Weeks (1930), all students under Scott, as NCTE presidents (281).

34 Donelson derives his title from Barbara Tuchman: "The story and study of the past, both recent and distant, will not reveal the future, but it flashes beacon lights along the way, and it is a useful nostrum against despair" (233).

35 The single page is handwritten, unsigned and untitled, but the script is very much the handwriting of Scott. It is also undated, but the last achievement listed is Scott's 1907 presidency of the MLA. Throughout this text I have referred to it as Scott's "Autobiography," though it does not bear that title in the Fred Newton Scott Papers collection.

36 Scott's handwriting, as Stewart mentions above, is somewhat difficult to decipher, but perhaps fortunately, the replies he habitually began on the backs of letters he received were usually concise. Yet on two particular occasions, both of which would have been emotionally stressful letters for him to receive and respond to, Scott's notes are characterized by numerous revisions which exacerbate the task of translation. This was one of the two, and in one place, where I am unable to identify the word Scott uses--it is possibly "ramifications"--I have placed a blank.

37 I am unable to resist the inclusion of Scott's footnote at this point:

The following anecdote (from memory) from Andrew Clark's Stories of Lincoln College illustrates a method, if not of doing away with theme-correcting, at least of reducing it to its lowest terms. The scene was Mark Pattison's room at Oxford. Pattison was standing with his back to the grate smoking, when a knock came at the door and to him there entered an undergraduate with a composition in his hand. Pattison took the paper, quickly ran his eye over it, then crumpled it up in his hand and threw it in the face of the student, who immediately left the room. Not a word was spoken on either side. (315)

38 FYI--Sciolism: a pretentious attitude of scholarship; superficial knowledgeability. American Heritage Dictionary.

39 Page number references for "Speech and the Community" are taken from The Standard of American Speech and Other Papers.

40 Perhaps it is more accurate to say that Scott would not have so easily and conveniently delineated between disciplines as we do today. His concept of education covered a broad, general spectrum of study.

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